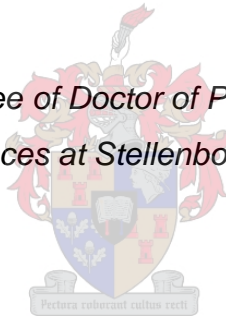


**Zimbabwean migrants and the dynamics of religion and informal support
associations in mediating everyday life in Cape Town**

By

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the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University*



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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study is about Pentecostal spirituality and everyday social life among migrant members of Forward in Faith in Cape Town, South Africa. My focus is on the capacity of the church to reach into and shape individual congregants' daily lives, through its various doctrines, moral instructions and forms of 'social surveillance'. The study explores the extent to which individual believers conform to these injunctions in their daily social life both inside and outside the associational and formal context of the church. While much has been written about the effort made by Pentecostals to make a break with relations they had before conversion, and the challenges attendant to those attempts, this literature has not addressed the everyday social relations of believers in multiple and layered public and private spaces. I aim to critically engage contemporary scholarship on religion which assumes that born again Christians enact these church messages and injunctions into their daily lives in ways that influence their definitions and daily practices of social life. Is it possible that individual congregants may find ways to be convivial with non-congregants simply in order to get along with them? What does the church bring to the daily lives of its members? Is there a split or disjuncture between the spaces of the church and everyday life? What do other experiences outside of the church bring to the everyday lives of individual congregants? My findings indicate that in everyday life, people are pragmatic. Since congregants in my study lived in a socially diverse world, how their relations were built outside the church were informed by this diversity. For example, despite the existence of various social media platforms (WhatsApp and Facebook) to share information regarding accommodation, and job opportunities, most church members preferred to share apartments with non-church members. The desire to escape 'social surveillance' from fellow church members and leadership was one of the reasons for this preference. While they were aware of the church's message about the 'polluting' world and the dangers of sharing social spaces with non-believers, in daily existence individual congregants arranged their lives and made decisions by themselves. In spaces outside the church, believers and non-believers sat together, ate together, travelled together in public transport and met in other public spaces. Through these mundane daily experiences, they arrived at an everyday ethics of conviviality. This study therefore concludes that, due to the complex social, cultural, economic and political environment

within which the church operated in South Africa, it was limited in its capacity to influence church members' daily lives.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie etnografiese studie handel oor Pinksterspiritualiteit en die alledaagse sosiale lewe onder trekkers van *Forward in Faith* gebaseer in Kaapstad, Suid-Afrika. My fokus is op die kapasiteit van die kerk om uit te reik na en die individuele gemeentelede se alledaagse lewe te vorm deur middel van sy veelsoortige leerstellings, morele instruksies en fatsoene van 'sosiale bewaking'. Die studie ondersoek in hoeverre individuele gelowiges konformeer tot hierdie opdragte in hulle daaglikse sosiale lewe hetsy dit binne of buite die genootskap en formele konteks van die kerk geskied. Alhoewel daar vele skrywe is wat handel oor die pogings van Pinksterspiritualiteit om weg te breek van verhoudings wat hulle gehad het voor bekering en die uitdagings rondom hierdie probeerslae, word daar nie in hierdie literatuur oor die daaglikse sosiale verhoudings van gelowiges in veelvoudige en gerangskikte openbare en private ruimtes aangespreek nie. My doel is 'n kritiese deelname in 'n hedendaagse religieuse vakgebied wat aanneem dat wedergebore Christene die kerkboodskappe en opdragte voorskryf in hulle daaglikse lewe op maniere wat hulle definisies en daaglikse gewoontes van sosiale lewe beïnvloed. Is dit moontlik dat individuele gemeentelede maniere vind om gesellig te wees met ander nie-gemeentelede slegs om met hulle oor die weg te kom? Wat dra die kerk by tot die daaglikse lewe van sy lede? Is daar 'n skeur of 'n gaping in die ruimtes van die kerk en die alledaagse lewe? Wat bring ander ervarings buite die kerk tot die individuele lewens van die lede? My bevindinge wys daarop dat mense pragmaties is in hulle alledaagse lewe. Aangesien die gemeentelede in my studie in 'n sosiale diverse wêreld leef, word hierdie verhoudings buite die kerk ingelig deur hierdie diversiteit. 'n Voorbeeld is dat tenspyte van die verskillende sosiale media platforms (soos *Whatsapp* en *Facebook*) om inligting te deel rondom akkommodasie en werksgeleenthede, verkies gemeentelede om woonstelle te deel met nie-gemeentelede. Die begeerte om 'sosiale bewaking' van medegemeentelede en leierskap te ontsnap is een van die redes hoekom hulle dit so verkies. Terwyl hulle bewus is van die kerk se boodskap oor die 'besoedelde' wêreld en die gevare om sosiale ruimtes te deel met nie-gelowiges, rangskik individuele gemeentelede hulle daaglikse lewe en neem hulle hulle eie besluite. In ruimtes buite die kerk sit gelowiges en nie-gelowiges saam, eet hulle saam, reis hulle saam in openbare vervoer en ontmoet in ander openbare ruimtes. Deur middel van hierdie banale daaglikse

ervaringe bereik hulle 'n alledaagse etiek van geselligheid. Die gevolgtrekking is dat weens komplekse sosiale, kulturele, ekonomiese en politieke omgewing waarin die kerk funksioneer in Suid-Afrika, is die kerk beperk in sy kapasiteit om gemeentelede te beïnvloed in hulle daaglikse lewe.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Studies of Pentecostalism and social life have emphasised more on the churches themselves than the daily associational and moral lives of church members beyond the immediate influence of the church. This study explores the extent to which individual believers of a church with a specific church doctrine regarding social relations with the world practice this doctrine in their daily social life both inside and outside the associational and formal context of the church. I seek to extend the study of Pentecostalism and migration beyond a focus on Christianity as a set of ideas and practices that occur in church. My question centres on how believers associate with or dissociate from non-believers outside the confines of the church and also how believers themselves associate with and socially disconnect from other believers when it suits them. What happens when a church's doctrines are 'tested' by migration and high levels of ethno-racial diversity? I am also interested in what happens when the church opens believers up to the world and makes them reach out to other people outside of the church.

To address these issues, I use the case of Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI), also known as Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA). ZAOGA was founded by Ezekiel Guti in the early 1960s. A small group of 'zealous young artisans' (Maxwell 2005) was expelled from the South African-derived Apostolic Faith Mission after missionaries had tried in vain to stop them from preaching (Guti 2011). Following their expulsion, they joined the Assemblies of God, which was based in South Africa and led by Nicholas Bhengu and worked closely with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. They left again, and in 1967 they founded the Assemblies of God, Africa (AOGA) before rechristening it to Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA). According to Guti, in 1960 God instructed Him to leave Highfield (a township¹ in Harare) where he was attending a missionary church but had faced strong resistance from the missionaries. Guti claims that when he was told to leave Highfield, he wept, not knowing where to go. He was then instructed to go to Bindura, "a very primitive area, no one will trouble you" (Guti

¹ Township is the common term used in South Africa to refer to high-density residential areas.

2011, p.31). Guti then started preaching on the 12th of May, 1960, “which is the day this ministry was born, under a gumtree, in Bindura” (Guti 2011, p.31).

Migration and concomitant networks promoted ZAOGA into a transnational Pentecostal movement² through expansion into other cities and towns in Zimbabwe and into other African countries (see Biri 2014a). In 1986 the movement began to establish itself in the former colonial master by planting assemblies in Britain. By 1995, the movement had around 300,000-400,000 believers in Zimbabwe alone (Maxwell 2005). Currently the church has branches in more than 100 countries and an estimated 2, 000 000 members globally (Guti 2011). It is called by different names in different countries: in Zimbabwe it is popularly known as Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA), Assemblée De Deus Africana (ADDA) in Mozambique, while in many other countries it is called Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI).

South Africa has more FIFMI members than any other country due to the influx of millions of Zimbabwean migrants into the country to seek both economic and social refuge. Decades of economic downward spiral in Zimbabwe have resulted in an unemployment rate of over 80 per cent (Muruviwa & Dube 2016). In 1984, Joseph Choto, who was a member of ZAOGA, came across the name of a Pastor, Wilson Mabasa, who was a member of the Pentecostal Full Gospel Church in Soshanguve. Mabasa was invited to ZAOGA’s Pastors’ Conference in Harare and encouraged to be a member of the church (Maxwell 2002a). The South African arm of the movement then expanded from Soshanguve to all the cities.

Cape Town has four FIFMI assemblies. The Salt River assembly, where I conducted this study, is located in an inner city neighbourhood with the same name. Its thousand-plus members, mostly Zimbabwean migrants, came from more than thirty medium and low density suburbs of Northern Cape Town. Over 90 per cent of these members did not own houses in Cape Town. They rented apartments and shared with people from diverse

² ZAOGA can be defined as a transnational movement since it operates at supra-national level. Its nationally diverse membership across many nations reflects its transnationalism (see Maxwell 2002a). Although ZAOGA has established itself in many countries, it is not global in the sense of being a ‘world-wide’ movement (Giddens 1990, cited in Maxwell 2002a, p.295). Since its key actors are migrants and not nations, the movement may not claim to be an ‘international’ movement.

national, ethnic and (non-)religious backgrounds. Some drove to church while others took trains or taxis. This residential pattern of church members across many neighbourhoods and the accompanying ethno-religious co-residence raised questions regarding members' observance of church doctrine vis-à-vis their everyday social relations. How did FIFMI members respond to diverse and potentially contradictory religious and non-religious doctrines where they lived and worked? How did they create social boundaries from the 'world' of 'ungodly' association, secular entertainment, sexual immorality, alcoholism, among other issues (see below)? Was it possible to always invoke and practice one's religious beliefs when confronted with contrary doctrines in banal ways? To understand the importance of social and moral boundaries for ZAOGA/FIFMI, I provide an overview of the movement's doctrines regarding these issues.

ZAOGA/FIFMI doctrines: An overview

While ZAOGA has general traits of Pentecostalism regarding sociality with the world and commodity accumulation (see below), it has also succeeded in promoting its own specific doctrines (Maxwell 2002a). Its teachings are strongly informed by the life history of its founder, Ezekiel Guti. Although Guti had a very poor upbringing in Mutema Ngaaone, a rural area in Zimbabwe, he managed to fight his way up the financial ladder and now wears designer clothes and expensive cars while living in beautiful houses. He writes books and teaches on hygiene, manners, mores, and diet to his ministers and their wives (Maxwell 1998). He is also passionate about how church members can wean themselves from black people's 'Third World Mentality' of feeling inferior to other races and believing that they could never prosper (Guti 2011).

Despite his affluence, Guti's hagiographies (see Togarasei 2012) and the 'sacred history' of the movement report that he retained strong moral ethics that were informed by the 'Zimbabwean culture' (Guti 2011). Although in 1971 he went to the United States to pursue pastoral studies at Christ for the Nations Institute, Dallas, and could have chosen to live there permanently, he resisted the temptation, 'obeyed God's word' and came back to Zimbabwe where he relayed God's instruction to the people to work 'talents' for them to prosper (Guti 2011). Talents are entrepreneurial activities conducted mostly by women to finance church projects and for personal use. It is some of this talents money that kept

the home church financially vibrant in 2008 and the first half of 2009 when Zimbabwe experienced hyperinflation. Prosperity is understood as a divine expectation by many Pentecostal movements (van Dijk 2002; Comaroff & Comaroff 2012; Haynes 2012; Meyer 2012). However, ZAOGA, following Guti's instruction from God, institutionalised the practice of wealth accumulation into the 'School of Talents', thus making it one of the key principles of the church's doctrines. Church members were also to follow Guti's example of returning to Zimbabwe and to see migration as a temporary sojourn (Biri 2012) and, equally important, as an evangelical mission (Adogame 2009; Machoko 2013).

Following instruction from God, Guti even refused to accept funding from a certain white man who wanted Guti to serve under his ministry (Guti 2011). Likewise, born agains who left Zimbabwe had to listen to the voice of God concerning wealth creation. While the accumulation of commodity items was promoted as a blessing from God, they had to be acquired in a manner that did not lead people into sinning (Guti 2009). Guti strongly emphasised on living a sinless life. In his book *Two Ways of Knowing God*, Guti (2009, p.36) singled out shunning sin as one of the secrets to having a personal relationship with God and as "the secret of this [ZAOGA] ministry". Sin here implies transgressing Christian principles as enshrined in the Bible. Thus, pastors were encouraged by Guti (2009, p.36) to prosper but not to be "greedy for money" by not rebuking members who contributed more money to the church than others when they sinned. Money could be either a blessing or a curse depending on how it was generated. Meyer (2010, p.118) points out that "While commodities and gifts may be identified as linked to the devil and his demons, it is important to realize that they are far from bad per se; their positive or negative nature entirely depends on the spirit that is behind them".

In Guti's view, the main approaches to avoiding sin are obedience, simplicity and self-control (Guti 2009). As evidence of self-control and of living a morally pure life, sexually, Guti related his experience of running away from a woman who wanted to seduce him into having sexual intercourse with him (Gayle n.d.). In keeping with the ministry's 'secret', associational life is an important part of the movement's doctrine (Muyambo & Machingura 2014), and many structures were established to promote church-based social networks. Transnational church connections were also developed as soon as a new

church was established. This happened through various ‘ministries’ and ‘fellowships’ for women, men and the youth. These associations helped to develop multiple cross-cutting bonds of fellowship beyond ethnic and regional connections, thereby reinforcing the movement’s cohesion (Maxwell 2002).

The movement’s associational life was also tied to the ideology of love, a term which was used expansively to mean intimacy with fellow church members but also Christian care for non-believers through attempts to convert them. Regarding love as a conversion practice, Guti (2009, p.4) notes: “When you love people it is hard to keep quiet without sharing [the word of God]”. Pertinent questions here are: How do born agains practice love as a way to convert non-believers while at the same time maintaining distance from them? Is there a limit to the practice of love, and how much can one push before they can give up? Within the church’s social boundaries, love entailed spending as much time together as possible braaing, in cell group meetings, watching movies, playing soccer, and also in once-in-a-while but important social gatherings such as cell group end of year parties, couples’ fellowships. These occasional gatherings were sometimes held in hotels but also in public parks and by the sea banks. For migrants in a foreign land, this was regarded as critical, since the belief was that, unlike back in Zimbabwe, there were few institutions that migrants could refer to for sociality as well as for material support. However, despite these gatherings as a church, members always had more time outside of that (see Chapter Three).

These ZAOGA/FIFMI doctrines were emphasised in conferences, Sunday services, and in various social activities outside formal church programmes. For instance, Maxwell (2002a, p.325) observes how “core ZAOGAn doctrines were continually expounded by Zimbabwean speakers” at the annual Pastors and Deeper Life Conferences which attracted hundreds of delegates from outside Zimbabwe to the movement’s 3000-seater conference centre in Harare. Zimbabwe-based leaders of the movement actively exported church mechanisms and message, and made an effort to familiarise new converts with the values of the church. Soon after a transnational connection had been made, a team from the Zimbabwe arm would make a follow-up and teach on “self-reliance through tithing and penny capitalism” and how to manage finances (Maxwell 2002a, p.324). In the

contemporary context, media technology has also become influential in spreading the doctrine (Togarasei 2012). The church now has a television channel, publishing house, and a music production studio which help in promoting the teachings of the movement.

Why focus on everyday life?

A focus on spirituality and social relations outside the church helps to address a number of questions. How do people deal with the everyday and how do they come to church and go back to everyday life? What happens when FIFMI's doctrines encounter other doctrines, both religious and non-religious, in private apartments where its members live together, or in other public spaces? In other words, what is the impact on socialisation between diverse social and (non-)religious groups when individual migrant believers continue to construct their life worlds around the doctrine of the church? Is it possible that, in the process of converting non-believers and interacting in general in multiple and layered spaces, believers arrive at ethics of conviviality that challenge their expected observance of church teachings and sermons? On a broader scale, I attempt to address the question: What is the link between migration, Pentecostal expansion and everyday social relations between migrants and ethno-religiously diverse communities in everyday life?

Research on Pentecostalism tends to focus on notions of conviction, and zealots more than the daily struggles of new believers as they develop in faith and carve out new social spaces in keeping with their religious worldviews (Jeannerat 2009; Landau 2009; Cazarin & Cossa 2017). This study extends its focus beyond the strong Christians and the leaders of the church to believers who are at different levels of faith. They include regular and recently converted believers, those who are struggling and are about to backslide, those who are 'yoked with the unbeliever' (Kaunda 2015), who may not be so invested in Christian activities. This is important for teasing out the real struggles of being a Christian, and to understand the possibly diverse ways in which members who attend the same church subscribe to church practices and ideologies. The approach is also important for exploring the different social and personal situations that frame members' spirituality (see also Daswani 2010) and the choices they make about social relations.

While studies have highlighted that Pentecostal believers struggle to break with past relations and practices (see next section), this observation has largely been based on studying churches themselves and not the everyday social life of individual believers (Fer 2010; Cazarin & Cossa 2017). To my knowledge, notable exceptions include Naomi Haynes's (2012) study of Pentecostalism in Zambia, Matthew Engelke's (2010) focus on Apostolic and Pentecostal movements in Zimbabwe, Lilian Chua's (2012) research of conversion practices in Malaysia, and Daswani's (2010) study of Ghanaian Pentecostals in Accra and London. In Zimbabwe's town of Chitungwiza, Engelke (2010) observed that while some individual Africa Initiated Church (AIC) members minimised regular communication with their non-AIC parents, others continued to be socially close to them. Of these studies, only Daswani's had migrants as its primary attention. These studies point to the different situational navigations of Pentecostal doctrines by individual born agains. I expand on these debates in Chapter Four where I discuss ZAOGA's conversion practices.

In South Africa, studies that focus largely on the activities of Pentecostal movements themselves have explored the changing religious landscape of urban life after apartheid through efforts to bring different ethnic and racial groups together (Ganiel 2006; Landau 2009; Hansen et al. 2009; Hay 2014; Heer 2015). In Cape Town, Ganiel (2010) found that Pentecostal churches have significantly worked to promote multi-ethnic congregations through paying attention to ethnic reconciliation, and, for Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCCs), using charisma to bring people together. In the context of migration and religion, Landau (2009, p.197) notes that "religion is one of a number of strategies for negotiating inclusion and belonging while transcending ethnic, national and transnational paradigms". While churches have become 'spaces of encounter', some have argued that cities such as Johannesburg are still marked by the legacy of apartheid, making it difficult for residents of suburban middle classes and of former townships to interact in everyday life and to attend the same religious organisations (Heer 2015). Churches are sometimes "fraught with contradiction, tension and ambivalence" regarding how to approach racial and ethnic diversity (Heer 2015, p.344).

Haynes (2012) argues that an examination of the link between Pentecostalism and social relationships should go beyond reliance on sermons and interviews with church leaders. This entails "a robust ethnographic engagement with those who spend their time listening to these messages" (Haynes 2012, p.23) in order to determine the extent to which believers are practicing what their leaders teach them. The approach is critical for exploring the ability of a preacher to act as a "middleman who enables congregants to find a set of rules which allow them to lead desirable social lives" (Cazarin & Cossa 2017, p.7). Jim Farnandez argues that anthropologists focusing on religious movements should consider the microcosmic internal perceptions of the believers themselves. This would help the researchers to have a detailed understanding of the ways the believers perceived and acted within the realms of politics and development (Fernandez 1978, cited in Maxwell 2005). In his study of church-based notions of abstinence and fidelity in Cape Town, Burchardt (2011) argues that church discourse seem to be based on strong assumptions that religion is central to people's daily experience, that sexuality is important for religiosity and that church communities are effective in controlling members' social lives. In Burchardt's view, these assumptions seem to be abstracted from the social realities of intimate life characteristic of the wider youth communities in which believers' ideals and practices are embedded. In this regard, studies of youth sexual practices, Burchardt argues, should go beyond religious communities to focus on their everyday intimate practices.

In the following section I review literature on Pentecostalism, migration and social life.

Pentecostalism and social life: Continuities and discontinuities

In this section, I combine a study of Pentecostalism, migration and diversity in relation to everyday life and attempt to bring these sets of literature together. Van Dijk (2002) terms Pentecostalism a brand of revivalist Christianity with profound roots in black American communities. It spread from the United States into other parts of the world around 1910-1920. It is marked by the infilling by the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, and various forms of faith healing. It is also known for its 'strict moral codes', an inclination towards material prosperity for its members, a strong sense of individualism, a critical attitude

regarding various forms of traditional cultural life (van Dijk 2002, p.94). It is also 'a faith within modernity' (van Dijk 2002), a feature that has appealed to many young people in urban areas of African countries. As Meyer (2004, p.459) notes, Pentecostals "present themselves as ultimate embodiments of modernity". In addition to these general practices, strands of Pentecostalism, from First Wave to Third Wave to Pentecostal Charismatic, have certain specific doctrines and ideologies that define their approaches to spirituality and relations with other political, social and economic institutions (Fernandez 1978; Adeboye 2006; Johnson 2009).

Some scholars have argued that Pentecostalism frees the believer from responsibilities over extended family. This corrodes social relations, as believers attempt to create new religious and class identities when they work towards personal accumulation and saving, what Maxwell (1995) calls 'penny capitalism' (Marshall 1993; Maxwell 1998). Accumulation is achieved through deliverance, giving material resources and money for various church activities with the hope that it will miraculously multiply (Comaroff & Comaroff 2012), and through cutting ties with the extended family (Maxwell 1998).

Breaking with the past relations also entails an end to extended kin connection, worship of ancestors, use of traditional medicine and a belief in the occult (Comaroff & Comaroff 1999; 2012). By distancing themselves from tradition, some women and young men are able to "undermine the sacred legitimation of social hierarchies of male gerontocratic elites which have excluded them from political power and social status" (Maxwell 1998, p.354). Maxwell (1998, p.354) defines tradition as "a reified set of beliefs and practices, strongly associated with non-Christian rural culture, centring on ancestor veneration, possession and ecological cults and witchcraft". In Zimbabwe, as in Togo (Piot 2010), Botswana (van de Kamp & van Dijk 2010), Mozambique (van de Kamp 2011), Ghana (Meyer 1998b), and South Africa (van Wyk 2014), Pentecostals are not supposed to take part in any forms of traditional rituals, whether communal or family. Instead, they must embrace Christian alternatives such as being possessed with the Holy Spirit and worshipping God. At the same time, Van Wyk's (2014) study of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG) in South Africa demonstrates the fears and anxieties this

throws believers, especially when their Pentecostal affiliation is not known by family members and they are invited to participate in family traditional rituals.

While participation in traditional rituals is discouraged, Pentecostalism has its own rituals which inform sociality, both in church and out (Robbins 2009). Joel Robbins (2009) argues that the reason why Pentecostalism continues to be on the rise when other institutions in general are struggling and fading, especially under neo-liberalism, is the role played by rituals in shaping believers' social life. Robbins (2009, p.59) believes that "to relate to one another as Pentecostals is to carry out rituals together". Members believe that God can intervene in their mundane lives and therefore rituals should be used by any church member and in any circumstance, be it eating, planting a garden, preparing for a test, and preaching to their close associates. Mutuality in interaction is informed by the shared knowledge of Pentecostalism's 'basic ritual frames' such as worship, healing, praise, prayer, similar to what Levine (1995) calls 'tools of association'. Closely related to basic ritual frames is bodily synchronization or shared bodily practices such as lifting of arms in praise, praying in tongues, and laying of hands in healing (see also Maxwell 2005).

However, Meyer (1998b), Biri (2014a) and Laurent (2001) have demonstrated that breaking away from past social relations and practices is not always possible or even desirable. It leads to concerns outside the church as believers still have to negotiate various practices and aspects of life with their families and friends. Worldly entertainment, and the diverse relations it entails, often finds its way back into the church through the appropriation of electronic media and the rebranding of secular music (Togarasei 2012; Maxwell 2005). This rebranding, as Hackett observes in Nigeria, is seen as a 'calculated attempt' to promote Pentecostalism's global expansion effort and to make various musical genres safe for consumption by born again Christians (Hackett 1998, p.258). During the 2008 Africa Cup of Nations soccer tournament, Pentecostal churches dressed in the national colours of Ghana as they prayed for the Holy Spirit to give victory to their team (Meyer 2010). This world-embracing attitude "complicates the possibility to maintain the classical Protestant distinction between being *in* the world, yet not *of* the world" (Meyer 2010, p.119 emphasis in original).

It is in the practice of converting new believers that the relationship between discontinuity (rupture) and continuity with the past vis-à-vis social relations are more intricate. Commentators such as Van Dijk (1992a), Marshall-Fratani (1998), Meyer (1998b) and Laurent (2001) have observed that being converted to Christianity is believed to mean “a radical rupture not only from one’s personal sinful past, but also from the wider family and village of origin” (Meyer 2012, p.159). Bennetta Jules-Rosette defines conversion as “a powerful clash resulting from the shift from one realm of thought and action to another, a moment of specific shock” (1975, p.135).

Conversion has also been constructed as a process which, although aimed at creating a new identity of a believer, is not a once-off practice that succeeds in ridding the believer of all past social relations and non-religious practices. This is demonstrated in Zimbabwe (Engelke 2010), Malaysia (Chua 2012), and South Africa (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991, p.247). Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) use the concept of ‘long conversion’ to argue that conversion is a process that reflects social and historical conditions. The Comaroffs suggest that “in most situations of ‘religious’ transformation, professions of new belief [among the nineteenth-century Tswana] belied the fact that older modes of thought and action were never fully laid aside” (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991). Their approach departs from binary oppositions (before/after, non-Christian/Christian) that are rarely informed by historical and social contexts (see Engelke 2004).

The ‘social gospel’ in (South) Africa

It is generally established that churches are to some extent shaped by their social, political and economic environment, while exercising some influence upon it (Kiernan 1981). Early writings on AICs suggest that they arose as a reaction to racial discrimination during colonial rule (Sundkler 1961). However, since political independence of many countries did not lead to a decline of religious independence, later writings shifted from the racial explanation to the urban explanation, which focused on the social experiences of Africans in urban areas (Kiernan 1981). For instance, Sundkler’s later works attributes the rise of AICs, particularly Zionism, “not in terms of any enduring feature of South African society but by reference to a single historical occurrence – the social disorder and upheaval that followed the Boer War” (Kiernan 1981, p.140). The explanation is that industrialization

and urbanisation led to an unprecedentedly high turnover of migrant labour. In urban settings, these migrants found themselves lonely in unfamiliar surroundings (West 1972; Dubb 1976; Johnson 1977). This disoriented them socially and culturally as it left them with very few institutions to provide for their needs. Churches became mechanisms of adjustment to urban society, as Martin West (1972) observes concerning AICs in Soweto. Thus, some studies observed a notable correlation between AICs' urban expansion and the influx of migrant labour into urban areas (Jules-Rosette 1975; Johnson 1977).

Nineteenth and twentieth century Protestant missionaries in South Africa were not only concerned with personal salvation but also with the 'social gospel', which embraced "the prophet's vision of the social, economic and even hygienic betterment of life that would result from a real filling of life with the spirit of God" (Taylor 1933, p.238-9, cited in Elphick 1997, p.348). Thus, in addition to planting churches, they also focused on educating youth, reshaping the family life, and sexual mores. The missionaries were worried that the "moral temptations of the city" – homosexuality, gambling, prostitution, and drinking – would undermine missionary activities and promote crime (Elphick 1997, p.351). In order to address this, some missionaries persuaded the colonial administration to provide healthy 'municipal locations' for Africans, and to supply rudimentary services. These social centres would minister to the totality of human needs. Fredrick Bridgman of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), a missionary organisation representing a number of Protestant missionary churches, was a strong proponent of the social gospel. Early in the twentieth century, he proposed that the church make a provision for reading, game, and social rooms. He facilitated the organising of athletics in Johannesburg's mine compounds, and the first supervised multiracial playground in Africa for children. He also founded an 'Educated Boys Club,' meant to facilitate concerts and plays for African young men. This social gospel's principal target was not just the church or mission station, but the whole of society as a way "to express God's love to Africans immune to theological appeals" (Elphick 1997, p.353).

Another approach to social life was adopted by African prophet-healers in South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, and Zambia, who constructed cities where those who were healed and or converted moved into, sometimes permanently (Fernandez 1978). These communities

did not only make believers 'feel at home', they were places in which "activity can follow a therapeutic vision and in which feelings of peripherality can be replaced by centrality" (Fernandez 1978, p.216). Some of these 'Holy Cities' flourished both socially and economically. A case in point is the Aiyetoro, the lagoon city of the Holy Apostles in southern Nigeria, which made economic fortunes with the sale of fish. The community was communal in its distribution of resources within while it was capitalistic in its economic relations with the larger Nigerian economy (Fernandez 1978). In Natal, Isaiah Shembe's Nazareth Baptist Church, located on the hilltop city of Ekupakameni, made an unsuccessful effort to provide adequate employment to its members. The idea was to limit the exposure of members to "the evil ways of the external world" (Fernandez 1978, p.217). The belief was also that working outside the holy city promoted economic individualism contrary to the communalism of the religious community.

These cities acted as modes of adapting to the modern world in terms of production, industry and commercialisation but also of continuing with traditional economic practices. In this regard, they were influential in "resisting modernization in the capitalist sense" (Fernandez 1978, p.217). Some apostolic sects like the John Maranke even strove to strengthen kinship structures and the traditional communal life that cocooned their members from urban influences (Jules-Rosette 1975). In these religious communities, education was both resisted and appreciated. While they embraced the languages and techniques of the modern world, they resisted the kind of education that would result in members leaving the community permanently. They were also careful not to be too 'modernised' to the extent of forgetting their mystical and therapeutic origins (Fernandez 1978). The belief was that modernisation must "resist full commitment to the rational-technical and the competitive orientations of the modern world which these religious communities have reason to regard as the source of the malaise to which they minister" (Fernandez 1978, p.217).

The following section reviews literature on transnational Pentecostalism, paying specific attention to ZAOGA/FIFMI, spirituality and social relations.

ZAOGA/FIFMI and migration

Studies have demonstrated that Pentecostalism frames the interpretation of migration processes and make them meaningful (Adogame 2009; Daswani 2010; Machoko 2013). International migration is often constructed as a divine mission to transform born agains from a life of poverty to a life of a Christian supposedly characterised by success and prosperity. (Daswani 2010). It is believed that God even reveals to prophets how church members can cross over to greener pastures. In some cases, prayer camps are organised to protect migrants during their migration journeys and to overcome cultural barriers in the wake of movement (Van Dijk 1997, cited in Daswani 2010). ZAOGA and other Pentecostals who planned to move to the United Kingdom (UK), Canada and South Africa engaged the services of ‘visa pastors’ who prayed for them to obtain visas (Biri 2014a; Machoko 2013). This was important given that jealousy relatives could plot against the success of the journey (Biri 2014a). Church members in Harare also prayed for Guti and other pastors to obtain travel documents (Biri 2014a). Given Zimbabwe’s deplorable human rights profile, it has increasingly become difficult for holders of a Zimbabwean passport to secure visas to western countries, hence the importance of praying for visas.

Despite the financial promises of migration, ZAOGA/FIFMI leaders believed that it challenged the moral foundations of church members. Pentecostal members are strongly united by the moral questions, especially regarding family life and personal relations (Iannaccone 1993), and FIFMI is no exception in this (Maxwell 1998; Biri 2014a). FIFMI pastors in South Africa and other countries often made an effort to address contemporary and moral issues affecting believers (Maxwell 2005). Some of the issues were similar to those preached to members in Zimbabwe, though tailor-made to fit the experiences of migrant believers: the challenges of living with and converting South Africans and; how to overcome evil territorial spirits that cause sexual immorality, laziness, poverty and family breakdown. ZAOGA/FIFMI leaders constructed sexual immorality as both a sin and a transgression of societal values (Guti 2011). Guti saw homosexuality as a ‘demon’ that afflicted some countries but not Zimbabwe. As he argued, it is not right to be homosexual ‘in our society’ (Guti 2011, p.85). Zimbabwe’s sexual morals are seen as products of both a rich cultural heritage and Christian principles. To protect church members from territorial

spirits of murder, and sexual immorality, which were believed to be prevalent in South Africa, ZAOGA employed the practice of annual deliverance explosions.

ZAOGA's desire to promote morality as its religious niche is demonstrated through its curriculum at the church's newly established university, the Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU), situated in the Bindura town of Zimbabwe. ZEGU's focus is not only to develop an academic, but also a 'total person' whose moral values conform to those of the church and the Zimbabwean 'society' (Muyambo & Machingura 2014). To do this, both students and staff participated in morning devotions as a way to 'feed' their souls and bodies, "a unique scenario not only conspicuously absent but non-existent in the other universities" in Zimbabwe (Muyambo & Machingura 2014, p.144). Other universities, Muyambo and Machingura (2014, p.145) argue, have managed to produce graduates who have "high-sounding qualifications but have undesirable character traits" which are not morally 'correct'.

There is rich data on how Pentecostals strongly shape their daily social lives around their spirituality (Maxwell 1998; Maxwell 2005; Haynes 2012; Biri 2014a). Maxwell's (2005) study of ZAOGA reveals that apart from listening to sermons in church and other church-related gatherings, Pentecostals are expected to devote their own time to studying the Bible. They memorised verses and lived a prayerful life '*at all times*' (Maxwell 2005, p.20 my own emphasis) to equip themselves against the Devil. This way their social life became "re-storied' in a manner that engendered positive change and meaning" (Maxwell 2005, p.21). Maxwell observes that Pentecostals:

. . . pray when they get up and go to bed, when they travel, at work in fellowship groups, when they sit down to eat a meal, when they enter each other's homes, when they open a business but most of all when they are sick or possessed, or face great hardship (Maxwell 2005, p.20).

This, Maxwell (2005) argues, is the same kind of Christian ritualism (Robbins 2009) they try to replicate outside the church as they engage in various church activities with the 'believing community'. This could be the church's associational life, and cell group meetings. As Maxwell notes, church memorabilia fill the homes of the believers: Talents

certificates and Bible school diplomas, photographs of key religious events. These reminded the congregants of Jesus and scriptural injunctions all the time. Reading material included devotional manuals and commentaries and Christian music filled the airwaves in their homes.

Individual members also listened to sermons from Ezekiel Guti or teachings from other renowned international preachers such as Benny Hinn. All these activities resulted in the congregants' social life being re-modelled along the life of the church. Little time was left for indulgence in polluting worldly activities (Maxwell 2005). As Maxwell (2005) points out, while Pentecostals created social distance with the outside world, they tried to be close between themselves in order to construct a holy community and to allow the free flow of the Holy Spirit. In keeping with this, ZAOGA emphasises honesty (truthfulness, integrity, sincerity) and how to choose friendship wisely. Muyambo and Machingura (2014) observe that ZAOGA is particular about who church members befriended because 'incorrect' choices led to serious problems. The use of biblical verses strengthened the need for having the right friends. Proverbs 12:26 is often cited, which says, "The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray". The result is that members have to make an effort to account to befriend church members.

What is the implication of this emphasis on church-based social life for the everyday relations of church members as migrants? Studies have demonstrated that social diversity, long distances separating believers' residential locations, and tight work schedules can challenge migrants' desire to commit to regular Pentecostal rituals of prayer and to create social bonds (see Daswani 2010). In such contexts, social life may be forged in other social environments. Daswani (2010) points out that migration creates a dilemma of adapting to individuality as dictated by the new work economy and maintaining communal obligations to both church mates and relatives in their countries of origin. He believes that migration can lead to "new independence and personal relationship with God" as migrants rely less on prophets, family and church relations to pray for them (Daswani 2010, p.462). In Johannesburg, Chereni's (2014b) study of FIFMI and transnationalism revealed that as some church members built new friendships with South Africans at their workplaces and colleges, they increasingly valued those relations

more than church-based connections. At the same time, other believers relied more on church and kin networks for material and emotional support than outside relations. My study used these insights to make everyday social relations the primary focus beyond cursory reference.

Migration often results in inter-ethnic and inter-religious marriages, something that is not appreciated by church leaders (Biri 2014a). These inter-marriages are believed to be problematic in that they can corrupt the religious values of ZAOGA members and increase divorce rates, something the movement strongly castigates. Some countries such as Nigeria and China are believed to promote the worship of occults. The coming together of religiously and ethnically diverse people is also dreaded for potentially promoting adultery. To address the impact of migration on the institution of marriage, married couples were encouraged to migrate together and to strive to make their marriage work regardless of the hardships they faced (Guti 1992; 2006). Women's and men's ministries were also founded to educate members on how to preserve their marriages. Efforts for couples to move together to South Africa have not always been successful, given the country's restrictive immigration policies, especially for low-skilled foreigners. There is also the desire for migrants to maintain a home in Zimbabwe as a cushion against economic and political uncertainties in foreign lands (Muzvidziwa 2010; Chereni 2014b). Married women usually stay behind to take care of the Zimbabwean home.

While these debates on Pentecostalism inform my study, I make a primary effort to focus on everyday social experiences of believers. This is important for exploring the possibility and feasibility for migrants to live the doctrines in mundane ways in South Africa's ethno-religiously diverse and in multi-layered spaces of the home, work, and other public and private contexts. In this regard, I turn to the extent of this diversity in South Africa.

Understanding diversity in South Africa and Cape Town

South Africa's stable economy and politics relative to her neighbours has resulted in millions of migrants flowing into the country. The result has been a form of 'super-diversity', a term used by Vertovec to account for the "proliferation of multiple categories and subdivisions of groups in the contemporary metropolis – based on religion, ethnicity,

history of migration, race and the layering of multiple historical forms of migration and diversity” (Wilhelm-Solomon et al. 2016, p.14). The mixed reception to this super-diversity by South Africans has been the subject of research by many scholars (Neocosmos 2004; Bekker 2009; Landau 2014; Mbembe 2015). While spates of xenophobia since 2008 have been used as evidence of hostility, ‘conviviality’ between local groups and migrants has also been witnessed in institutions such as transport systems (Nyamnjoh & Ingrid 2014) and churches (Hay 2014). Migrants even have the option to be ‘tactically cosmopolitan’ by inserting themselves in or remaining partially excluded from, the social and economic spaces of South Africa as they weigh the benefits of each option (Landau & Freemantle 2010). Landau and Freemantle (2010) note that migrants preferred partial inclusion because it reduced the responsibilities associated with being full members of a particular space. They therefore created a new language of belonging that engendered unpredictable, unexpected, yet lasting categories of collective membership.

Commentators such as Nuttal (2009) and Frenkel and MacKenzie (2010) have argued against constructing South Africa spaces rigidly in terms of transformed and unchanged, insider and outsider, and foreigner and local. This is because strictly reified understandings fall short of articulating, as Nyamnjoh and Ingrid (2014, p.218) argue, the interconnections and entanglements of urban social life and the ‘tactical alliances’ entered by diverse people for survival. For Frenkel and MacKenzie, it is important to understand the relational positionings of people across political and social systems. This entails, as Mbembe (2001) argues, considering how convivial relations between previously antagonistic groups (the oppressed and the oppressor) are being framed in post-apartheid South Africa. This approach means that social relations and identities should be understood as coeval and not incommensurate.

A growing realisation among social scientists that urban social life is routine, complex, ambivalent, and intricate has motivated an ‘everyday’ turn in ethnographic studies of social relations in the context of migration-engendered diversification (Wise & Velayutham 2013; Wessendorf 2014; Vertovec 2015). This turn indicates the growing research interest in the banality (Billig 1995) and taken-for-granted ways in which diverse social

actors negotiate everyday social relations and traverse different socio-spatial contexts (Karner & Parker 2011; Neal et al. 2013). 'Human togetherness', as Zygmunt Bauman (2013) puts it, is not necessarily an initiative of the macro policies of integration and community cohesion, with their bifurcated conceptions of inclusion and exclusion, insider and outsider (Amin 2002; Formichi 2013).

Amin (2002, p.959) believes that "much of the negotiation of difference occurs at the very local level through everyday experiences and encounters". These micro everyday experiences and practices feed into the macro processes of social practice and provide important entry points into understanding 'discursive worlds' (Thrift 1999, p.300) of meta-narratives of transnationalism, and globalisation. Such macro worlds are framed by seemingly insignificant routines occurring at the level of everyday life (Lees 2003). Migrants' diverse and context-based experiences of relationships, places, and things are renegotiated and sometimes replaced by new ones during migration. As Ho and Hatfield (2011, p.710) note, "the very aspect of experience that the notion of the everyday seeks to highlight are central to migration because they are the ones that often undergo great change during migration".

In her study of the struggle for decent accommodation among residents of the Cape Flats, Cape Town, Fiona Ross (2010) highlights that while Cape Town used to be the most integrated city in South Africa before the Second World War, it is now the most segregated city. This can be traced to the 1950s when the apartheid state promulgated the Group Areas Act, which prohibited black people from residing in town on a permanent basis. The coloured³ were given first preference for job opportunities to African persons. Racial zoning during apartheid segregated public toilets, beaches, and park benches based on race, and everyday access to and use of urban space was strongly informed by racial classifications (Christopher 2001; Teppo 2009). Racial diversity within churches also suffered as the Group Areas Act meant that some people had to relocate from certain suburbs where they were attending church. This accelerated the growth of African

³ South Africa's political system of apartheid (1948-1994) used skin colour as a key marker of race. Under this system, a South African was classified as white, Indian or black. A fourth category of coloured was later introduced to classify the offspring of racially mixed parents (Mayeza 2014).

Initiated Churches (AICs) (Anderson 2005). Following the end of apartheid racial zoning was abolished in public spaces and residential suburbs (Christopher 2002). However, vestiges of segregation in cities still remain.

Despite this segregation, Cape Town has some of the most ethno-religiously diverse neighbourhoods where migrants and refugees have resided for decades, with varying degrees of economic success and of 'insertion' into the local social spaces (Hay 2014; Williams 2015). In Bellville, Brudvig Ingrid (2014) described the conviviality that punctuated co-residence in this neighbourhood where thousands of Somali refugees, among other foreign nationals, are living. Paula Hay's (2014) study of conviviality among members of the Bay Community Church, a Pentecostal movement in Cape Town, also highlights the ways in which faith communities brought many nationalities together. Hay observes that the church's congregants from South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi valued their spiritual identity more than their national identities, and this helped them to be socially intimate with each other in church.

There are also reports of migrants who are making an effort to actively 'integrate' into the local political and social fabric of the city (Scott 2013). In Cape Town, Scott (2013) used the case of Solidarity Forum, a grassroots organisation co-founded by two Zimbabwean migrants, to highlight the importance of 'negotiated denizenship' as a way of negotiating belonging among migrants. Without romanticising migrants' 'integration' efforts, negotiated denizenship suggests that when migrants actively engaged in community organisations with various actors where they lived, they developed a sense of solidarity that transcended national identities. Scott argues that research on migrants' experiences of space should focus on particular locales and not just the state's relationship with migrants through the former's immigration policies. Scott's view resonates with Katsaura and Abe's (2016) understanding of the dynamics of urban relations in the context of what they call multinationalism. In their attempt to define the situated negotiations of social relations between diverse groups in Johannesburg, Katsaura and Abe (2016) have coined the concept of mediated multinational urbanism. Drawing on Habermas' thinking, what they bring out is the importance of establishing 'strategic action' and 'communicative

action' to negotiate co-habitation in everyday urban life marked by multinationalism. As they argue:

Everyday life in multinational urban contexts is such that the co-presences of people of diverse nationalities are routine. Coming with these routine, co-presences are 'accidental dialogues' in which people necessarily have to speak to each other in everyday socio-economic transactions, irrespective of their social differences (Katsaura & Abe 2016, p.10).

These studies highlight that ethnic diversity and concomitant attempts to live with it are not exceptional (Meissner 2015). They demonstrate that South Africa's diversity has multiple faces vis-à-vis social existence and that its urban residents "have developed a kind of agility and ability to live simultaneously in many different spheres" (Hansen 2009, cited in Wilhelm-Solomon et al. 2016, p.14).

Conceptual points: Thinking with the concept of ambivalence

My study benefitted from the use of the term ambivalence as a conceptual footing. The view that humans are ambivalent or full of contradictions has been discussed by many anthropologists and other social scientists (Gluckman 1958; Hajda 1968; Ewing 1990; Bauman 1991; Simmel 1991; Marotta 2008; Berliner et al. 2016). Ever since Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler introduced the term in 1910, the ambivalence of human behaviour and attitude has been studied not only by psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud but also by sociologists and anthropologists as well. Bleuler believed the term had many meanings, one of which was "simultaneously opposing affects – love and hate – toward the same object" (Smelser 1998, p.5). This earlier focus was in the disciplines of psychology and psychiatry. Notable figures who made a distinction between psychological ambivalence and ambivalent experiences at the social level are Georg Simmel and Robert Merton. Although Simmel did not explicitly refer to the term, his writings, especially on social boundaries, demonstrate his awareness of the ambivalence of social structures (Lüscher 2002). In its classical formulation, it was Merton and Barber and a group of scholars with whom they worked on role analysis who, in the 1950s and 1960s, studied ambivalence as a social concept. They borrowed insights from Bleuler while also reexamining Simmel's work (Hajda 1968; Merton & Barber 1976). Sociological

ambivalence is traced to the article by Merton and Barber (1963). The argument was later expanded by Coser in 1966 (see Coser 1966). Some theorists of modernity and postmodernity have also adopted and developed the concept in various ways. Zygmunt Bauman's (1991) book, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, is one such case.

In his essay on sociological ambivalence Robert Merton (1976) understood ambivalence as the practice whereby socially-structured roles call on social actors simultaneously to embrace and reject the same object or norm. As he argued:

In its most extended sense, sociological ambivalence refers to incompatible normative expectations of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior assigned to a status (i.e., a social position) or to a set of statuses in a society. In its most restricted sense, sociological ambivalence refers to incompatible normative expectations incorporated in a single role of a single social status . . .”
(Merton & Barber 1976, p.6).

This definition is in keeping with my attempt to explore the compatibility between efforts by born agnosts to convert the world while at the same time avoiding sociality with them, the embrace-reject or save-avoid paradox (see Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001). While, as a first wave Pentecostal movement, FIFMI sees the born again as having more power than the devil, there is still a limit to how much contact is permissible.

As a concept, ambivalence “enabled him [Merton] to conceptualize patterns of action in terms of socially structured alternatives presented in the form of binary oppositions” (Levine 2006, p.236). This understanding of ambivalence means that “the core-case of sociological ambivalence puts contradictory demands upon the occupants of a status in a particular relation” (Merton & Barber 1963, p.96). Building on this view, Coser (1966, p.175) believes that sociological ambivalence is “built into the structure of statuses and roles”. Merton and Barber argued that while social roles can be examined with regards their dominant attributes, they should also be understood as a dynamic organisation of norms and counter-norms that in combination produce ambivalence. To support their argument, Merton and Barber give the example of the physician, who is expected by the medical field to be both concerned and compassionate for the patient as well as

professionally detached. Although Parsons examined the notion of socially structured alternatives before Merton, Parsons's characterised social relations in terms of the dominant pattern alternative they embody (Levine 2006). Merton's emphasis was on "the significance of continuously operative counter-norms that alternate with dominant norms in defining social roles" (Levine 2006, p.236). Here I adopt this understanding of social relations to examine the ways in which the dominant doctrines of ZAOGA are continuously challenged by this-worldly doctrines as defined by the church. In taking this approach, I am also informed by the debates on Pentecostalism that have demonstrated that breaking with past social relations and practices is not always practical or desired by Pentecostals (see above). The re-tooling of music to suit Christian tastes is one such example. Closely related to the dynamic organisation of norms is also the belief that people can vary in degrees of their ambivalence as well as their awareness thereof. This understanding is important for my research which focuses on church members who are at different levels of faith. It enables me to explore the degree to which newly converts navigate between their past and their desired future through various practices as they gradually learn about the doctrines of ZAOGA/FIFMI.

I should point out that the way I understand ambivalence is not in the dictionary sense of not being sure. Rather, ambivalence is about the potential challenges of coming up with a clear-cut rupture between Pentecostal doctrines and the world vis-à-vis sociality. My aim is to employ the concept to argue that people's actions can sometimes diverge from their beliefs.

Ambivalence and social boundaries: Thinking with Georg Simmel

I want to build on the discussion of ambivalence presented above by considering how this concept informs my understanding of social boundaries in everyday life. Simmel was the first to explicitly identify the significance of ambivalence in understanding social boundaries, social interaction and the human condition (Marotta 2008). For him, society is the patterned interactions among members of a group, the sum of responses to ordinary life events. This entails understanding elements of everyday life; forming friendship, keeping secrets, being a stranger, and playing games. Simmel believed that social behaviour is irreducible to individual personality. Nor, Simmel argued, could social

relationships be adequately explained by larger collective patterns such as ‘the economy’. Rather, the results of everyday interaction create a level of reality in its own right, an “interaction order that is never totally fixed and is therefore always problematic and capable of change” (Hess et al. 1993, pp.13–14). By focusing on webs of patterned interactions and the forms of these interactions as they occurred and reoccurred in everyday cultural settings, Simmel departed from the organicist theories of Spencer and Comte (Coser 1971, p.177). In the context of my study, I consider transnational Pentecostal movements (FIFMI to be precise) and migrant ‘communities’ as falling under these ‘larger collective patterns’ and, therefore, as incapable of articulating mundane aspects of everyday interaction. As some scholars of migration have argued, it is important to consider the everyday social realities of migrants as individuals and not lump them as if they always experience social practice as a group. For example, Eastmond (2007) in her use of narratives to capture the lived experiences of refugees, believes that such personal accounts are important in that they provide insights into the diversity behind “over-generalized notions of ‘the refugee experience’” (Eastmond 2007, p.249).

Boundaries, in Simmel’s thinking, have multiple manifestations, they are not rigid and fixed. Human beings have the propensity to transcend and erect boundaries. Although cultural, social, symbolic and physical boundaries define who we are, argues Simmel, they do not necessarily limit us. This creates a paradox in which “we are bounded in every direction and we are bounded in no direction” and that “the human being is likewise the bordering creature who has no border” (Simmel 1991, p.10). In this regard, boundaries are important for the constitution of the self but they do not confine us. Simmel admits that such characterisations seem to present logical contradictions, but he cannot abandon them because “they are the only ways we can express accurately the complexity of our being: we are not things or phenomena, but unified acts of life, whose integrity eludes consistent linguistic description” (Weinstein & Weinstein 1989, p.51).

Using the metaphor of the door and the bridge, Simmel (1991) managed to articulate aspects of connectedness and separateness which constitute the human subject. The bridge symbolises connection between what was once separated socially, psychologically and physically. The bridge can be utilised to understand cross-cultural

relations but contact with difference, and thus the need for a bridge, depends on the existence of separateness (Marotta 2008). On the other hand, the door, represents boundaries, but also the possibility of openness. This openness can be in relation to the possibility of interacting with strangers (van Houtum & Struver 2002). As van Houtman and Struver (2002) argue, the metaphor of the door allows for openness in which 'fluid sharing' occurs across differences and a 'debordering experience' is possible.

Religion and complex beliefs

Within the field of religion and migration studies, the development of ambivalence as a primary conceptual tool has been very limited. However, there are studies that have argued that people's religious beliefs are complex, spontaneous and transcend clear-cut, coherent and systematic patterns (Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001; Laurent 2001; Ramey 2007; Karner & Parker 2011; Werbner 2004). Anthropologists such as Schielke and Debevec (2012) and Berliner (2016) believe that religion appears to constitute a "site *privilege*" (Berliner et al. 2016, p.3) for the investigation of incompatible practices, feelings and statements. In this regard, some commentators have explored the save-avoid paradox in the narratives of conversion in which discourses of "saving the world" may also be simultaneously accompanied by efforts to avoid it (Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001).

Like Werbner (2013) and Berliner (2016), I am interested in the taken-for-granted nature of ambivalent practices, feelings, ideas and discourses. While there are cases where people deliberately act in an inconsistent manner and deny doing so, such as in certain political campaigns, inconsistencies are often "neutralized in good faith" (Berliner et al. 2016, p.5). Thus Boltanski and Thevenot (1991, cited in Berliner et al. 2016) believe that while the social agent may act and self-reflect, occasionally conscious and 'in control', their ambivalent actions are often a response to the contingencies of everyday life.

In line with the above thinking, my study considered the motivations for individual congregants' certain choices of actions, such as where they live (residential locations) and with whom they share apartments. This included addressing the following questions: Do individual congregants always make conscious decisions to choose one apartment over another? As tenants in apartments, do congregants always have influence over who

they share apartments with? Do they always consider the church's ideologies when they look for and live with co-tenants? By addressing these questions, my hope was to unpack the diverse ways in which the congregants, as social agents responded to the contingencies of everyday life.

Here I also considered how individual congregants deployed or did not deploy church doctrines in defining mundane aspects of sexual morality, and consumption, issues that often spark debates in Pentecostal movements. My aim was to understand whether or not congregants' quotidian experiences with social diversity reconfigured their interpretation of what to eat, where to eat, and with whom to eat. Regarding sexual morality, I explored whether FIFMI members' social relations with non-church members were always in keeping with the church's doctrine regarding the issue. Samuli Schielke (2009) argues that morality does not have a universal definition. In his study of the everyday lives of young men in a Nile Delta village, Schielke (2009, p.166) notes that "Morality is not a coherent system but an incoherent and unsystematic conglomerate of different moral registers that exist parallel to and often contradict each other". In view of this, how did individual congregants who shared apartments with people from diverse moral and religious backgrounds define the boundaries of their relations?

Methodology

The ethnographic nature of this research was meant to understand the ways in which FIFMI's doctrines informed its members' choices regarding who to share apartments with, their everyday relations with non-believing co-tenants, and responses to happenstances. The methods I used were selected based on their capacity to gather data regarding issues such as the church's views on morality, the physical body vis-à-vis cleanliness, dispute resolution, and love. I spent eighteen consecutive months in the field, starting in June 2014 until December 2015. After that, I continued to attend the church irregularly.

Most of my research participants were of middle class background, reflecting the class composition of the church but also Pentecostal membership in general. Research in Zimbabwe (Mate 2002), Ghana, the Netherlands and Botswana, Mozambique (Van Dijk 2002; Van de Kamp and Van Dijk 2010), and Malaysia (Chua 2012) has shown that

Pentecostal churches draw membership largely from the young and upwardly mobile population. Since young and middle-aged generations dominate membership in urban areas (van Dijk 1998; Mate 2002), they are also the target of messages on self-control and re-socialisation. For instance, the young male is strongly encouraged to refrain from engaging in extramarital affairs, violence, and from consuming tobacco and alcohol. This has been observed in Zimbabwe (Maxwell 1998; Mate 2002), South Africa (Frahm-Arp 2010), Burkina Faso (Laurent 2001).

While I have been a Pentecostal for about twenty years, I was not attending FIFMI as a full-time member, only visiting irregularly. Some of the ideologies of the two Pentecostals were similar although they also had their differences. However, my intent and what I noticed, beyond leisure and religious participation, changed once I became a researcher. I started taking notes, observing activities from the standpoint of a researcher, and participating in church programmes with intellectual questions in mind.

I recorded forty sermons. The sermons were not only preached by the assembly's pastor, but also by more senior pastors – overseers of particular cities and countries – who were invited to preach at conferences. In 2015, the founders of the church came to Cape Town and all FIFMI assemblies in the city gathered in Athlone Stadium. I was one of the people that attended this conference. In addition to these sermons, I watched over twenty FIFMI sermons posted on YouTube by various people. I also watched those by the founder of the church and his wife. Church members and teachers at the church's Bible School had videos about various themes, including the history of the church. I also bought compact discs of sermons from the church's media department. The approach I used was to ask a member of the media department for a disc that addressed a particular topic, say sexual immorality. Sometimes I would just scan through the piles on my own, selecting the discs whose cover titles I thought would be useful for my study.

Data on the history of FIFMI Salt River Assembly also came from twelve unstructured interviews I had with church elders, deacons, cell group leaders, and leaders of the church choir. I also interviewed members who were part of the small group that started the Salt River assembly. These respondents had detailed knowledge about the physical

relocations of the church from one neighbourhood to another, relations with non-church members, methods used to convert people, and the establishment of various leadership structures. Although I had planned to have more detailed interviews with the Salt River pastors, I only managed to meet with them for about an hour when I visited them at their house to seek official permission to conduct the study. Subsequent attempts to schedule an appointment were not successful. This was due to their tight schedule, which saw them preside over about a thousand church members, in addition to their professional music career and invitations to preach at other FIFMI assemblies both in South Africa and beyond.

In keeping with Denscombe (2010), one of my main aims was to emphasise depth, subtleties, detail, interconnectedness, and complexity of everyday social relations rather than the breadth of the social relations. To do this, I had to limit the number of participants from whom I solicited detailed narratives. By its nature, the topic on everyday life may not yield depth and intricacies if not restricted to a few cases. As Geertz (1973, p.23) points out, "Small facts speak to large issues". This was certainly the case when attempting to understand migrant congregants' experiences of everyday social boundaries. I therefore followed the lives of seven people, which I studied through unstructured interviews, observing and participating in both church-based and off-church activities and programmes. I saw them for the whole year almost every single day, at their apartments, at cell groups, during and after Sunday church services, on family fun days, and cell group parties. By following the lives of a small sample of church members over a long period of time, my focus was on depth rather than the quantity of people who participated in the study.

At the same time, I also had cases where I interviewed some church members on certain topics. When I had informal conversations and interesting stories emerged, I then followed up with them. Thus, I had Mary who shared with me her story about winning money in a competition just at the 'right time' when she desperately needed it to go to Zimbabwe; Kuda, who narrated a miraculous trip he had when he was invited for a job interview in a city he had never been to before; Marshall, who narrated his experience of

sleeping on the street when he first came to Cape Town; and Musa, a high school teacher who talked about the questionable morality of his students.

I visited some congregants at their residences where I observed their social relations with their co-tenants and immediate neighbours. During these visits, I paid attention to how individual congregants understood the everyday social relations they built with both South Africans and fellow migrants. I was also interested in the meanings individual congregants attached to such relations and how they perceived their immediate social realities. Some church members visited me at my apartment where we engaged in extended conversations.

I also participated in various social and formal church gatherings. These included family fun days, men's fellowships, cell group parties and weekly Bible study sessions, and end of year parties. Cell groups are composed of small groups of church members who come from a particular geographical location. Their functions are to study the Bible in detail in addition to what they learn in church, to follow up on members who live close to one another, to build confidence of individuals through giving them a less intimidating platform to share scriptures, to assist one another materially based on need, to celebrate members' birthdays, promotions at work, and graduation ceremonies, and to preach to prospective converts. The intimate environment created in cell groups enabled members to know each other by name and to engage in other activities beyond the cell group. Such an environment was important because the church had around one thousand members who came from more than thirty low and medium density suburbs. Thus, cell groups enabled me to build relations, which I used to connect with more church members beyond the cell group. Sometimes we would take a train to church with cell group members. Members who had cars also offered me lifts from church. Attending other festivities referred to above was important for building relations with the congregants and for laying the invaluable foundation for association that enabled the congregants to open up to me and invite me to their apartments for further socialising.

While I privileged migrant congregants' experiences, meanings, and perceptions of everyday social relations, what I present in this study superseded a mere description or

a direct reproduction (Denscombe 2010) of these encounters. Rather, by using my own social experiences, I engaged in what Denscombe (2010) calls a ‘crafted construction’ of these relations. As I did this, I also compared and contrasted my own experiences of social relations in the spaces I found myself in when I first came to South Africa in 2008 to what the congregants narrated to me.

Reflexivity

As a black, male, Zimbabwean, Pentecostal, migrant student with university qualifications, I have to reflect upon a number of issues, some of which I return to as the thesis unfolds. In this section, I discuss my relationship with FIFMI believers at the Salt River assembly and how it both positively and negatively influenced this study. My ‘insiderness’ and ‘outsiderness’ can be understood as entangled.

In my study, I was both an insider and outsider in complex ways. While I am a Zimbabwean migrant student, Pentecostal, I was not a full member of ZAOGA, and this limited my intimate knowledge of the church. At the same time, some established members of the church helped me to blend in with FIFMI life. One of the members, Baluleke had become a deacon and leader of the Men of Integrity ministry, two influential positions which commanded respect from the church in general. Another member, Taedza, was one of the church choir leaders. Being Pentecostal myself meant familiarity with church rituals, readiness to participate in prayer meetings and willingness to conduct Bible study sessions. When I participated in social outreach programmes organised by the church, such as family fun days, men’s braai meetings and cell group parties, I was viewed as one of the church members and not just an outsider researcher. Being in a position to understand the meanings attached to these activities was an important part of producing rich data. Such nuances are not always known to the outsider (Hellowell 2006).

However, I had to grapple with understanding various aspects of FIFMI ‘culture’ which I was not familiar with. While I come from a Pentecostal background where giving is important, I learnt that ZAOGA/FIFMI emphasised it more than most Pentecostal churches. Thus, on a single Sunday service one could be asked to give love offerings, normal Sunday offerings, cell group dues, sacrifice towards the construction of one of the

church projects – hospital, university, pastor’s house or car – and pay monthly dues for the men, or women or single ladies’ ministry. The following communication was posted on the Men of Integrity WhatsApp group in February 2015 when the Salt River assembly was preparing for its first conference of the year:

This serves to remind all our members that preparations for our conference are underway. Your support is greatly appreciated. We kindly urge those yet to contribute their R300 for the conference to do so. We will be collecting the money this coming Sunday. In addition, we are still collecting R100 from each member for our DPs’ [District Pastors] grocery. The grocery money has to be forwarded at the end of this month so that our DPs’ grocery needs are taken care of. We encourage all members to bring their contributions to church on Sunday. Every contribution is important, even if you do not have enough. Kindly note also that our first Big Day⁴ for 2017 is coming this Sunday. Let’s support the work of God and the vision of our leadership.

Although ordinary church members could contribute to only one or two projects, church leaders were expected to set an example by contributing to all the projects. Since I often sat next to my church leader friends, it felt awkward for me to remain seated when they made their way to the front of the church to give. Sometimes I had to stand with Baluleke by the church door, observing how he used humour to encourage Men of Integrity to pay their monthly dues, myself included. In this regard, my connection to ‘high profile’ believers limited my options as far as giving was concerned. At the same time, association with church leadership positioned me strategically for observing and participating in various church activities. Thus my identity as both insider and outsider had its own advantages and disadvantages (see Hammersley 1993).

I also had to deal with gendered aspects of soliciting data from both men and women. Although I did not have many challenges working with men, my research contact with women, especially married ones, was not always straightforward. In order to address this

⁴ This referred to the Big Sunday, which is attended by all the assemblies in a given geographical district as demarcated by the church.

limitation, I had to conduct research with married couples, visiting them at their apartments when they were together, especially on weekends. Even this strategy could not give me direct access to married women, whose voices remain somewhat muted in this study. Under both 'Zimbabwean culture' and FIFMI doctrine, it is morally unethical to have prolonged conversations with somebody else's wife. Similarly, a married man is discouraged from holding a one-on-one chat with a single woman over multiple sessions as this is believed by church leaders to invite the temptation to engage in extra-marital relations.

In ZAOGA, a single man who plans to get into an intimate relationship with a single woman must do it through a practice called *kugara masofa*, meaning to sit on the sofas. This entails the man and woman sitting down with a church elder to discuss the proposal from the man. If the man's proposal is successful, subsequent meetings between the unmarried couple must be conducted in public places, usually in the presence of a third party. In keeping with these rules, my meetings with single women was facilitated by Taedza and my wife. Interviews could be in groups or as singles, when Taedza invited her church friends to her apartment.

Regarding language issues, all the church members who contributed to this research spoke Shona as their first language. In fact, FIFMI Salt River is predominantly Shona-speaking. English was used for all official church business. However, sometimes preachers mixed English, Shona and Xhosa, and this was based on the assumption that the latter two languages were more represented in church than any other language. While preachers largely preached in English, individual believers would in most cases give testimonies in Shona. Since Shona is also my first language, I would record the testimonies and transcribe them after the service. Testimonies constituted an important part of the Sunday service and my study as well: about 20-30 minutes were dedicated to believers who wanted to testify of the goodness about God in a foreign country.

However, some people I visited made an effort to switch from Shona to English the moment I became 'serious' in my conversations about my research and sought to obtain their consent to record them. This for some was a way to identify with a researcher they

considered to be highly educated. For others who had university education, using English when having conversations regarding my project was a courtesy meant to lessen the ‘unnecessary’ task of transcribing the data. Although the courtesy was welcome, I realised that by using English, the members sometimes struggled to articulate the issues they wanted to put across. This resulted in loss of finer details about certain events and activities. At the same time, where English was a limitation, conversations would be code-switched to Shona. This way, complex issues were expressed in a clearer way.

Closely linked to the dynamics of language use was the aspect of social class. Although some of the FIFMI members who actively participated in this study earned more than my quarterly stipend from Stellenbosch University, and owned beautiful cars, they still saw me as belonging to a higher social class given that I was doing a Ph.D. While there was a time in Zimbabwe when earning a degree was seen as pointless given the hyperinflation of 2000 to the first half of 2009, people with doctoral qualifications are still highly esteemed. I remember some older respondents asking me about how I managed to study at an elite university like Stellenbosch. They would also ask various questions regarding how I financed my studies, whether I was racially profiled on campus and, for those who could afford, how they could enroll their children into my university.

Chapter outline

In Chapter Two I discuss, in detail, the growth of ZAOGA into a transnational movement, highlighting the factors that helped its expansion. My primary focus is on the church’s activities in South Africa, although I also use evidence from other countries. Chapter Three is about FIFMI Salt River assembly, where I conducted the study. In this chapter my aim is to discuss the ways in which the church is promoting within-church associational life. I discuss the various structures established to encourage members to socialise together. I also explore the degree to which church leaders used some of these structures to limit the time spent by members outside church-based social and formal spaces. Chapter Four is about how Salt River assembly’s conversion practices open individual members up to the world in mundane ways. Its methods of reaching out to prospective converts allow members time to build sociable relations with prospective converts,

relations which may not always be broken in the event of failure to convert a potential born again. Chapter Five explores the dynamics of responding to happenstances in public spaces by individual FIFMI members. The chapter brings out members' diverse ways of interpreting chance meetings and situations based on their levels of faith and understanding of those situations. In Chapter Six, my focus is on individual church members' attempts to evade 'surveillance' from leadership by largely avoiding to share apartments with church mates. Sharing accommodation with non-believers or non-church members challenges their doctrines in quotidian ways. Chapter Seven extends the debates raised in Chapter Six by exploring what happens in everyday life between co-tenants with diverse and at times diverging (non-religious) doctrines. Here, I turn my attention to aspects of co-residence that seem insignificant but critical definers of a person's religious doctrines, such as sharing bathtubs, and kitchens and the politics of maintaining them in a hygienic state. In Chapter Eight I provide a recap of the issues raised in the study.

CHAPTER TWO: MIGRATION, TRANSNATIONAL PENTECOSTALISM AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss FIFMI's transnational expansion and practices in relation to the life experience of Ezekiel Guti. I discuss how migrant church members are encouraged by pastors to emulate Guti's moral values, and to always use Zimbabwean 'culture' as their reference point. I also attempt to discuss various strategies used by church leaders to maintain control over members' everyday lives. In countries where FIFMI is found, the name of Guti is regularly referred to and held in high esteem. This is done through the use of new media technologies that have strengthened transnational ties between its members. However, while it has become a transnational movement, FIFMI has maintained Zimbabwe as the original spiritual centre (Biri 2014a). For instance, most of the pastors who are leading assemblies outside the country are Zimbabweans who left the country largely as economic migrants. They started as small groups in selected neighbourhoods, attracting mostly Zimbabweans in that area, but also making effort to reach out to citizens of the host country. Once the small group had grown, a pastor was sent by Guti to lead the church (Maxwell 2006). With the continuing expansion of the movement, however, there are now pastors, elders, and deacons of diverse nationalities. This can be seen at the Deeper Life Conferences for pastors.

Most Zimbabweans living in South Africa are believed to be predominantly Christian. Research conducted by Hungwe (2013b) on survival strategies of Zimbabweans living in Johannesburg revealed that 90% of them attended church. While there are many churches that Zimbabwean migrants attend, the most popular ones are FIFMI, Apostolic Faith Mission, and Apostolic/*Vapostori* sects. The role of the church in providing spiritual protection and guidance in the face of adverse social, political and economic conditions is one of the major factors that draw non-nationals to church (Maphosa 2011). According to Maphosa (2011), most Zimbabwean migrants who visited Apostolic sects were driven by the church's reputation of prophecies that foretold the future about migrants' fortunes, impending misfortunes, job opportunities, and how to find favour with public authorities, especially the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Although the exact number of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa is not known, given that some are irregular migrants, estimates by the International Organisation for Migration (ILO) put the numbers at anything between 1.5 million to 3 million. The migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa can be traced back to the colonial period. Economic reasons mainly accounted for young men moving to work in South Africa's mines and farms. Zimbabwe's political independence in 1980 witnessed a reduction in the numbers of young men moving to South Africa. White people fled the country in the 1970s and 1980s due to the war of independence (1970s), and as silent protest to black majority rule (Crush 2011). However, state-sanctioned violence in the predominantly Ndebele-speaking provinces of Zimbabwe in the 1980s resulted in many young Zimbabweans seeking refuge in South Africa (Pigou 2004). With the post-2000 crisis in Zimbabwe, migration to South Africa has spiked, with millions seeking both economic and political refuge in South Africa and other countries (Muzondidya 2008). This massive inflow of Zimbabweans into South Africa created a strain on social services even as it increased the complement of unskilled, semi-skilled and highly-skilled labour. Refugees, asylum seekers, and other groups had to find ways to eke out a living in a country that has increasingly become overwhelmed with foreign nationals. It should be noted that in South Africa it is difficult to tell whether a non-national is a refugee, asylum seeker, migrant or another category because of the government's policy of non-encampment of refugees and asylum seekers. Non-encampment means that these groups become 'mixed' (Polzer 2008), making them all migrants.

FIFMI in the context of migration to South Africa

The expansion of ZAOGA was aided by the rapid economic growth of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the 1950s (see Phimister 1977; Nyambara 2000; Drury 2002). Many migrant workers came from neighbouring states, worked for some time before they returned to their homes or moved on to look for better opportunities. The history of the church is connected to the activities of the African Apostolic Mission South Africa (AFMSA), one of Africa's earliest Pentecostal movements. In Zimbabwe, AFMSA started in 1915 in rural Gwanda, and by the 1930s it had expanded to most rural parts of Salisbury (now Harare). Its approach to proselytise – which included a rejection of bio-medicine and

a propensity to rebaptise mission church converts – “caused the colonial state considerable discomfort” (Maxwell 2002a, p.299). The result was that they were banned from the reserves in 1934. Following the ban AFM began to expand their operations in urban areas, starting in Mbare, Salisbury’s (now Harare) first African township. Later, they opened another assembly in another township in Highfield under the leadership of Enoch Gwanzura. A group of entrepreneurs and artisans worked with Gwanzura, and these included Priscilla Ngoma, Abel Sande, Caleb Ngorima and Joseph Choto. Ezekiel Guti, who was working as a carpenter (see Guti 2011), also became part of the leadership of this group.

Guti ran an evangelical campaign in 1957 named the Ezekiel Guti Evangelical Association (EGEA). Guti would conduct healing sessions at his cottage in Highfields, and his success soon attracted the attention of elder African pastors and missionaries. Following fruitless attempts to halt Guti’s activities, he left the AFM with his prayer band in 1959. His departure coincided with the arrival in Zimbabwe of the Assemblies of God South Africa (AOGSA) under the leadership of a black South African evangelist called Nicholas Bhengu. AOGSA was an umbrella body for a variety of assemblies led by missionaries and by black and white South Africans (Maxwell 2002a). In 1960 Bhengu assigned Guti to establish a church in the town of Bindura. Although Guti was now based in Bindura, his EGEA continued to run healing and evangelical activities in Highfields with funding from South Africa and Canada. This exasperated Bhengu, who in 1967 expelled Guti from AOGSA. The latter founded his own Pentecostal movement which he called Pentecost African Assemblies of God. In 1968 he changed the name to Assemblies of God, Africa (AOGA).

Guti’s transnational reach began in the 1950s when he started to pray not only for Zimbabwe but also for Africa (Guti 2011). To further prepare himself for a transnational ministry, he started learning to preach in English (Guti 2011). His message, which revolved around his lifestyle, focused on moral and material advancement, industry, sobriety and self-reliance (Maxwell 2002a). In 1971 he went to Dallas to study, and when he returned he had international networks and ideas on how to grow the church. This aided the church’s rapid expansion, and by 1977 the church had over 185 branches and

fifteen church buildings. Internationally, it had the title Forward in Faith Ministry International. The church had thirty-two branches in Malawi, five in Botswana, over fifty in Mozambique and four in Zambia (Not I But Christ, cited in Maxwell 2002a). Most of the branches were established by migrants who came to work in Southern Rhodesia. Church growth was achieved through small-scale open-air meetings and door-to-door visits (Maxwell 2002a). Data from Central Statistics (1994, cited in Maxwell 2002a) indicated that twenty three years later, the Zimbabwean arm had about 400,000 members in Zimbabwe, 186 houses with many more under construction, and 140 church buildings. Overall, it had approximately 2,000 pastors and 2,500 assemblies.

Zimbabwe's political independence in 1980 heralded an end to restrictions on movement of information and people across borders. This opened up the possibilities for AOGA, which in 1981 was renamed Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA), while it retained the title FIFMI to reflect its transnational expansion. The movement rapidly reached out to Latin America and Asia (Maxwell 2002a). It also embraced media technology. Togarasei (2012) argues that the use of media technology was not a brainchild of ZAOGA or any other African Initiated Churches (AICs), because missionaries had long used print media to spread their message. However, ZAOGA capitalised on the increasing levels of literacy among the born again community to use diverse forms of media technologies to reach the people (Togarasei 2012). The church now uses video and audio tapes, pamphlets, and magazines. The movement also has its own publishing house and a bookshop at its headquarters in Waterfalls, Harare. Books are published by Guti and his wife Eunor, pastors, elders and deacons. They focus on wide ranging topics such as marriage, the importance of prayer, general prosperity, and on "hagiographic, histories of the church founders" (Togarasei 2012, p.261). Flyers and posters are produced to advertise revivals and crusades.

Within Africa, church growth was also stimulated by increasing socio-economic challenges, such as food scarcity, dramatic population rise, and state contraction. As states retreated from providing welfare services, secular NGOs and missionary charities became more active in filling the gap left by the states (Maxwell 2002a). Beginning in the 1990s, Zimbabwe began to experience intensified economic and political problems. At

the peak of the country's economic downturn in early 2009, inflation reached 95% (Wester 2009). These problems had many causes, including the World Bank initiated austerity measures (Chattopadhyay 2000; Zeilig 2008; Kingston et al. 2011), and the unbudgeted state compensation for ex-combatants (McGregor 2002; Kriger 2003; Fontein 2006). Another cause was the fast-track land redistribution programme of the 2000s whose aim was to redistribute land from white farmers to black people (Worby 2001; Chaumba et al. 2003; Moyo 2011). In the 2000s dwindling popular support for the Zimbabwe African National Unity, Patriotic Front (ZANU PF), led to country-wide political violence (Kriger 2012; Cheeseman & Tendi 2010; Hafner-Burton et al. 2014). In the wake of all this political and economic unrest, there was an influx of Protestant churches from America with abundant resources which attracted prospective converts and members from other less resourced churches. During this time, ZAOGA "drew much in terms of style, presentation and resources from the global born-again movement" (Maxwell 2002a, p.314). Crusades were becoming grander as resources increased and as the movement's evangelists drew insights from renowned international preachers such as Benny Hinn and Jimmy Swaggart whose audio and video tapes were now locally available. At the same time, door-to-door evangelism remained important for establishing the groundwork for a new branch. ZAOGA also connected with the global born-again movement through the annual Deeper Life Conference for elders and deacons. The conference attracted international dignitaries and speakers. In the following section, I discuss ZAOGA/FIFMI's transnational evangelical effort.

Migration as an evangelical mission

While migration is about seeking new politically and economically safe opportunities, for some Pentecostals, it is also about fulfilling God's covenant of building the church and spreading the gospel (Adogame 2009; Machoko 2013). Many commentators have discussed the effort by transnational Pentecostal churches to evangelise to local groups (Daswani 2010; van de Kamp & van Dijk 2010; Machoko 2013). Most of these discussions are largely based on what their research participants say without getting into ethnographic detail about how this materialises and what other social experiences accompany this process. Regarding the conversion mission, Biri (2014a, p.153) highlights that a ZAOGA

emissary who was sent to Malaysia defined his work as that of stopping “the devil snatching the church”. FIFMI pastors described Malaysia as a country rife with false religions, disrespect and immorality. Guti is said to have witnessed this when he travelled to Malaysia where women disrespectfully sat on his bed, behaviour that could not be imagined in Zimbabwe (see below) (Biri 2014a).

Karagiannis and Glick Schiller (2008) have also demonstrated the effort made by African Pentecostal churches in Germany to convert as many German nationals as possible through translating sermons into German regardless of how few Germans were in the church services. The same churches also inserted themselves in the social life of Germany through actively engaging in Christian German organisational structures and conversion practices that brought them into constant contact with Germans.

Some scholars have argued that more than emphasising ethnic, racial and nationality boundaries, transnational Pentecostal movements value religious affiliation. In other words, faith communities create more important identities that render other classifications less significant (Stepick 2005). As they increasingly come into contact with local groups and as more local groups join these churches, members may separate religion from culture and accord less value to ‘ethnic baggage’ that detracts them from focusing on the primary goals of religion (Yang & Ebaugh 2001). In Yang and Ebaugh’s (2001) view, while older generation migrants remain ethnically and linguistically exclusive, younger generations tend to ‘bridge’ with local groups. This view is not cast in stone, as Stevens’ (2004) study of Ghanaian churches in the US revealed that both younger and older generations used local languages in order to evangelise to host groups. In South Africa and Zimbabwe, Ganiel (2010) found that Pentecostal churches have significantly worked to promote multi-ethnic congregations through paying attention to ethnic reconciliation, and, for Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCCs), using charisma to bring people together. Previously dominant white group, Ganiel notes, acknowledged wrongs committed during colonial rule and tried to assist previously disadvantaged ethnic groups.

In Canada, Machoko (2013) observed that many Zimbabweans who attended FIFMI and other AICs still maintained that their primary focus was on preaching the gospel to all

nationalities and not the maintenance of national and ethnic identities. They believed that they were in Canada to 'emancipate Canadians' from their brand of Christianity that, in their view, had become unbiblical and adulterated. This adulteration was evident in the accommodation of certain practices such as homosexuality, ordination of homosexual pastors, and gay and lesbian marriages. At the same time, although the migrants desired to universalise the gospel, their desire to maintain cultural links with Zimbabwe meant that they sang Christian choruses and songs in Zimbabwean languages. Zimbabweans "wanted to maintain kin in Zimbabwe and expressed Zimbabwean cultural values while preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ clothed in Zimbabwean culture to all peoples" (Machoko 2013, p.485). While they wanted to convert Canadians, Zimbabweans had not assimilated into Canadian churches or Canadian society, and "Zimbabwean AICs have proven attractive within this cultural experience of alienation and dislocation" (Machoko 2013, p.473). This strong attachment with Zimbabwe was influenced by many challenges they faced in Canada, including finding a man or woman to marry, racial discrimination, getting permanent residency or citizenship, and child delinquency. To address these problems, they resorted to prayers, sacrifices, and rituals from AICs and AIR. This gave them a sense of security, identity, and protection. Regarding racial discrimination, Machoko (2013) found that Zimbabweans who were already pastors, elders or deacons when they moved to Canada were not recognised as such when they joined Canadian churches. Some members of African Initiated Churches (AICs) highlighted that, in addition to seeking spiritual and material benefits, they attended services to meet potential partners with similar traditional, cultural and religious values.

In South Africa, FIFMI fits the description of "reverse missionization" (Maxwell 2006, p.392) as Guti and other founders were once members of a South African Pentecostal church. Although Guti and other church leaders did not encourage church members to move to South Africa and other countries permanently, they defined migration in terms of evangelical mission. Transnational Pentecostal Churches like FIFMI have been viewed as some of the institutions that promise to bring diverse ethnic and national groups together. This promise is strengthened by the troubled and 'dislocated' religious background of many South African groups in urban areas. In Hansen et al's (2009)

argument, while South African 'natives' may have resided in modern South Africa for generations,

. . . it is not their reference point in terms of religious and cultural authenticity. This lies elsewhere, for whites in Europe, for Indians in the Indian subcontinent or in the Middle East, and for many Africans either in a distant past, or elsewhere on the continent. The large urban spaces in South Africa are sites of struggle, success, tragedy, drama and aspiration but rarely sites of the 'proper' - neither the culturally nor the spiritually proper. Those domains lie elsewhere, in the ancestral land in the countryside . . . or elsewhere in the world (Hansen et al. 2009, p.191).

Similarly, Adam Ashforth (2005), in his book *Witchcraft, violence and democracy in South Africa*, argues that modern townships of South Africa in general and Soweto in particular are sites of alienation, displacement, and are destitute of ancestral spirits. These townships are also imagined as morally polluted and characterised by an unease intermixture of lives and spirit. This situation, Ashforth argues, means that rituals that are conducted in such a context are not 'proper' given that they are uprooted from ancestral homes.

In the wake of all this cultural and religious wandering, migrant pastors, preachers and teachers became a valuable source of 'authentic' spiritual guidance and cleansing (Hansen et al. 2009) for local, mostly black, populations. This was premised on the belief in the spiritual superiority of a travelling, spiritually purer and more powerful personality. The influence of transnational Pentecostal churches, as with other emerging religious movements, also lay in the promises and opportunities for economic and cultural advancement, inclusion of black South Africans into a global community of believers. Local religious institutions were believed to be incapable of providing such opportunities and promises (Hansen et al. 2009).

However, some commentators such as Hungwe (2013b) argue that there are very few South Africans converts in churches that are attended by Zimbabwean migrants. According to Hungwe, since Zimbabwean migrants usually attended Pentecostal

churches that originated from Zimbabwe, churches became sources of social exclusion. This was so because not much was done to convert South Africans to become members of these churches. The preachers used Zimbabwean languages, Shona and Ndebele, to conduct services. At the same time, Hungwe also found that there were also Zimbabwean migrants who attended Pentecostal churches that originated from Nigeria, Ghana and Congo. In Johannesburg, FIFMI is also 'gradually' attracting South African nationals (Chereni 2014a). Maxwell (2002a) demonstrates that in order to ease communication between ZAOGA 'missionaries' to other countries and the local people, Guti sometimes sent people who spoke the same language as the locals. Thus, in the 1990s, Guti assigned Maggie Ndlovu to evangelise in South Africa based on her gifts in youth work and evangelism but, more importantly, her fluency in the local language (Maxwell 2002a).

In Paula Hay's (2014) view, churches in South Africa are more likely to facilitate mingling among diverse social groups than other socio-spatial contexts. Relations among 'strangers,' both ethnic and national, are likely to transcend mere tolerance. Hay (2014) observed this in the Bay Community Church, a Pentecostal church in Cape Town, South Africa, which had congregants from Zimbabwe, Malawi and South Africa. Conviviality in such a context, Hay observed, was dependent upon individual agency and aspirations and how intersubjectivities of church members were governed through, for example, religious rituals. The church was seen by its migrant members as providing home away from home. As Hay (2014, p.61) points out, the Bay Community Church provided a platform for its members to safely mediate misconceptions and fears about the 'other'.

Hay (2014) also observed that intimacy among church members was produced by the charismatic worship that punctuated church services. Conviviality was also expressed in bodily practices and physical interactions such as hugging (Hay 2014, p.35), and free movement. Such practices enabled the members to develop both 'bonding' and 'bridging' capital. The argument is that migrants did not always stick to themselves. The inter-ethnic diversity of the community church and its members' quest for conviviality interrogated the rigid binaries of 'nationals' and 'foreigners', 'us' and 'them'. The congregants were implored to demonstrate that they were vessels for God's grace and love. For this reason, physical intimacy during worship was not preconditioned by the worshippers knowing

each other outside of church services (Hay 2014, p.60). Emphasis on intimacy encouraged members to reconcile possible tensions based on their membership in other networks outside the church context. This allowed them to carve out multiple belongings. As I discuss below, closely related to transnational churches' focus on conversion is the desire to reorient the morality of people in the host country.

Territorial spirits and morality

Ruth Marshall (2009, p.131) has articulated the principle goal of transnational Pentecostal churches, through programmes of evangelism, as “the transformation and control of individual conduct and the creation of a particular type of moral subject”. Marshall submits that Pentecostalism has become an influential ‘event’ that is ushering in a new ‘discursive regime’, new truths and new styles of conduct. A lot has been written on Pentecostals’ belief in providing a moral code to migrants in alien western countries (Daswani 2010; van de Kamp & van Dijk 2010; Machoko 2013). As African Pentecostal movements evangelise in Europe and in other African countries, they gain a sense of moral strength over former colonial masters, which are believed to have dwindling congregations (Adogame 2009). Daswani (2010) demonstrates this in her study of Ghanaian members of the Church of Pentecost in London, while Machoko (2013) has similar findings for Zimbabweans who attended ZAOGA in Canada. In London, Ghana Pentecostals are giving precedence to moral boundaries over racial and national boundaries and equate the morality of the UK to that of the biblical Sodom and Gomorrah, which was destroyed by God following extreme acts of sexual immorality (Daswani 2008). Some church members even believed that it was their presence in the UK that was saving the country from being destroyed by God. Others saw living in London as an opportunity to connect with a global community of Christians from other countries as well as to preach to and pray with other races (Daswani 2010).

In Botswana, Van de Kamp and Van Dijk (2010) found that Ghanaian Pentecostals in Botswana believed they could provide a moral campus to the locals. Ghanaian Pentecostals and their leaders had to demonstrate their cultural competence to “keep relations with the local society under control (and carefully watched)” (van de Kamp & van

Dijk 2010, p.136). This was important given the extent to which locals were seen as very promiscuous considering the higher rates of HIV than those of Ghana. Even Ghanaian children who attended school in Botswana and were learning to speak Setswana still closely followed patterns of 'relative isolation' that reflected their parents' patterns of social relations.

ZAOGA leaders saw migration as posing a major threat to the general morality of its members as it exposed them to evil spirits embedded in particular countries. They generally believed that in every country there were evil territorial spirits that were particular to that country (Biri 2014a). These evil spirits needed to be prayed against so that they did not affect migrants living in other countries. South Africa was allegedly 'possessed' with the spirit that promotes sexual immorality through its legalization of homosexuality. In addition, the country is characterised by high murder and rape cases relative to its neighbouring countries. The demon of sexual immorality was also believed to haunt countries like Botswana and Malaysia. Malaysia was claimed to have the spirit of immorality, false religions and disrespect. Pastors had to be careful because Malaysian ladies "can easily trap you . . . and sexually provoke you", voiced one preacher (Biri 2014a, p.153). Chinese and Nigerian nationals allegedly brought heathen gods when they come to Zimbabwe for business (Guti 2011). Inter-marriages that accompanied ethnic, religious and national diversity also posed a threat to, and eroded the 'superior' morals of Zimbabweans (Biri 2014a).

FIFMI leaders defined territorial spirits, especially those of sexual immorality, in contradistinction to the idealised sexual mores espoused by Zimbabwe through its 'culture'. These mores upheld female sexuality while according men authority over their wives (Mate 2002). Regarding homosexuality, for example, Zimbabwe "has been and is a leader in good moral standards due to our rich cultural heritage and the Christian principles" (Guti 2011, p.86). Biblical reference to Genesis 19 was also made, which refers to the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah following their indulgence in homosexuality. In Zimbabwe, homosexuality is seen by Guti as 'perverse', 'evil' and alien, having allegedly been introduced from other nations. He lamented the problem of the 'Third World' of copying what these 'backslidden' people western countries were

engaging in instead of following the good things they used to do before they backslid. Gutti claimed that homosexuals needed deliverance from evil spirits. In 1995 ZAOGA organised a march against homosexuality in Harare in support of President Mugabe's anti-homosexuality stance. In 1997 a fair booth for the Gays and Lesbians Association of Zimbabwe, which was being showcased at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair, had to be closed following a directive from the government of Zimbabwe (Shoko 2010).

According to Shoko (2010), homophobia in Zimbabwe is informed by both Christian and traditional morality. As his 1988 sermon in Harare indicated, Gutti believed that Western countries and churches had lost their Christian values. He lamented:

One of the problems we have in the third world is that of copying what backslidden western people are doing instead of copying the good things they were doing before they backslid. These nations used to have many churches and many of their leaders were Christians.. . but when they prospered they forsook God... I believe this is our time. It is time for black people and their nations to rise up. Don't go to Europe and learn their ungodly things. Learn what they used to do before... (Guti 1989, p.23-27, cited in Maxwell 2002a, p.318).

Stereotypes about territorial spirits were also directed at ZAOGA believers who struggled with the same sin even after being prayed for by church leaders. Such spirits were believed to be ancestral and hard to exorcise and could cause a born again to remain sexually immoral or poor while others prospered. As Maxwell (1998, p.360) observes, some pastors and evangelists knew how to stereotype and ridicule and were "masters of acute social observation". They would provide images of an uncle with the demon of extramarital affairs inviting a believer to the bar. The same demon would be imagined as using the believer, who would leave his well-furnished house in the suburbs to live with a girlfriend in high density areas under squalid living conditions. In one of the sermons a pastor pointed that "Spirits spoil marriages, they make your wife look like a donkey so that you don't feel for her . . ." (Maxwell 1998, p.360).

As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the narration of Guti's life experiences from a poor rural upbringing in rural Zimbabwe to his pastoral education in 1971 at Christ for Nations College in the US and return to Zimbabwe largely framed ZAOGA's doctrine (Maxwell 2001; 2006). Upon completion of pastoral studies, Guti claims that God instructed him to go back to Zimbabwe (Guti 2011). Guti claims that he was told to teach his followers to work hard, to give and tithe for God to bless them. This would make the members rich. As Maxwell (1998) observes, his lifestyle represents a modern Zimbabwean man who has defied a poor upbringing and is now assisting others to find their way up too. ZAOGA members living outside Zimbabwe used Guti's experience in Dallas as a frame of reference for how life outside Zimbabwe should be lived. Those who are in Zimbabwe used it to inform their choices on migration, how they were to conduct themselves once they moved and why they had to remember to return to Zimbabwe.

Pastors who preached about demons that afflicted particular nations stressed the belief that Christians have a choice between active and passive responses to the threats posed by the Devil, and that the most promising strategy was to aggressively confront the Devil and his agents through prayer (Kraft 2005, cited in Jorgensen 2005). This response is termed spiritual warfare and it consists of a range of articulate principles, strategies and tactics whose terminology heavily borrows from military jargon (Maxwell 2005; Stritecky 2001). For example, as in the army, specific campaigns were designated as Operations (Jorgensen 2005), or, for FIFMI, Explosions, popularly known as Explos (Biri 2014a). These campaigns were led by 'prayer warriors' who engaged in intelligence operations important for 'spiritual mapping' (Jorgensen 2005). Spiritual mapping consists of redefining political borders, and capitals through superimposing our understanding of events and forces in the spiritual domain onto circumstances and places in the material world (Otis 1991, p.85).

However, nation-based demons were also constructed as powerless over a peregrinating preacher who was a source of envy among the host citizens (Hansen et al. 2009). Hansen et al (2009) note that the majority of South Africans in urban areas have lost their spiritual roots because of massive rural-to-urban migration and therefore look to migrant pastors for spiritual guidance. This search provided a platform for migrants and host citizens to

meet as they worshipped together (Landau 2009). Even ordinary believers have been empowered by the belief that they are victorious over spirits of the land and can be prosperous even in unpredictable economic situations (Maxwell 2005).

Migrant pastors and other religious specialists are constructed by South African 'native' communities as both assets and potential threats. On the one hand, Zimbabwean migrants, like other international migrants, are part of the 'African renaissance' envisioned by Thabo Mbeki, the former president of South Africa, since they accommodated South African exiles during the fight to dislodge apartheid. On the other hand, migrants are seen as unduly benefiting from what proper South Africans toiled for. Like other African migrants, they are also stereotyped as arrogant, having a self-assured cultural attitude and capacity for organisation and enterprise, legal or not (Hansen et al. 2009). This stereotype has resulted in migrants being both resented and envied. As Hansen and colleagues note:

Migrants are rumoured to possess what many an ordinary South African feel they no longer have: pride, cunning, economic capacity and spiritual power. This complex and evolving relationship, based on mutual stereotypes, apprehension but also new forms of social life, has been creative but also at times extremely violent (Hansen et al. 2009).

Regarding how migrants contributed to these mutual stereotypes, Landau (Landau 2009) notes that South Africans are regarded as violent, dishonesty, vectors of diseases, uneducated, promiscuous, overly tolerant (especially regarding the acceptance of homosexuality . . .), and heathen. Landau adds that "While many more foreigners would like their children to learn English or another South African language, they remain wary of them ever considering themselves South African or accepting what they see as value systems rooted in the South African soil"(Landau & Freemantle 2010, p.383).

In addition to the power that the believer had over territorial spirits, he or she could also seek deliverance from territorial spirits if need arises. Mutema (2010, p.277) notes that "The Pentecostal theology of deliverance, with its emphasis on the need to trust in God's will and not to be intimidated by the tricks of the devil, fits well with African migrants'

cosmology". The belief in the existence of territorial spirits and the need to deliver FIFMI members from such spirits was the idea behind the initiation of 'Deliverance Explos' by Eunor Guti, Ezekiel Guti's wife. These Explos have increased the interaction between ZAOGA and FIFMI assemblies. While the Explos used to be held only in Zimbabwe they have now been decentralised to other countries as a result of the massive numerical growth of the church. Explos are also popular for their teachings on marriage (Pasura 2008). At the same time, Explos can also reinforce national stereotyping. Biri (2014a) notes that some members justified Explosions on the basis that they needed to be protected from witchcraft practices and other evil machinations allegedly rampant in certain countries. A Zimbabwean living in Malawi pointed out the following to Biri: "Malawians are expert witches; I am afraid of them. I live in fear - we need Explos because of that" (Biri 2014a, p.157).

Deliverance remained popular and was embraced by Zimbabwean Pentecostals because it spoke to their economic insecurities, especially beginning in the late 1990s when the country's economy started to weaken (Maxwell 1998). High inflation rates and high unemployment meant that very few Zimbabweans had enough money to take care of their basic needs. While the spiritual explanation of deliverance did not factor in socio-structural and macro factors that contributed to general poverty, it did at least bring to attention how changes in family and personal lifestyle could enhance economic and social mobility (Maxwell 1998). In addition, most FIFMI members had a pessimistic view of the pervading political atmosphere in Zimbabwe. Evidence of this was in voter apathy. This was despite that church leadership had tried to maintain good relations with the top brass of the ruling party.

Movement and marriage

ZAOGA leaders saw migration as posing a major threat to the institution of marriage. Marriage is constructed as working for God, or 'God's ministry', and occupies a very important place in the life of a Christian. Bible passages are used as the guiding principles on how married life should be lived. ZAOGA strongly condemns divorce and upholds the value of the nuclear family. There are men's and women's ministries whose focus, inter alia, is to teach about ways to control the disintegration of marriages. These include the

Gracious Woman, founded in 1984 (see Mate 2002) and the Family Builder Ministry (FAMB), founded by Ezekiel Guti in 2007. In fact, FAMB was founded at a time when Zimbabweans were leaving the country in large numbers due to hyperinflation and high rates of unemployment.

Gracious Woman castigates laziness, encouraging women not to complain about their husbands not earning enough. Instead women should do something to complement their husbands' inadequate income. As helpers, married women should submit to their husbands provided they are not tyrants (Mate 2002). Support for their husbands can also be in the form of prayer, tolerance, love, and kindness. Mate writes of one speaker in Gracious Woman who likened male-female roles in marriage to road rules, where a careful observation and following of driving rules is important for avoiding harm to oneself as well as other road users. In marriage, 'road rules' are given by God (through the Bible), and lay out a blueprint for what a woman says, does and does not do. While the authority of the husband through various decision-making responsibilities is promoted, use of brute force for domination is not sanctioned. Married women are described as 'helpmates' to their husbands and should find various ways to assist their husbands both at home and outside. Mate (2002) argues that these teachings on marriage romanticise female subordination to men. This is given legitimacy through reference to biblical verses, with submission to the husband being equated to submitting to God's will. By submitting to their husbands, women are believed to be 'liberated' as they avoid confrontation while overcoming marital problems.

Guti encouraged husbands and wives to emigrate together to avoid the temptation of adultery or fornication (Biri 2014a). Married couples who, for one reason or another, could not travel together were discouraged from moving out of the country. This was in line with FAMB's aim of restoring broken families, building strong families, and preserving 'Zimbabwean values'. Even husbands and wives residing in Zimbabwe were discouraged from living in separate areas. For a husband to live in town while the wife remained in the rural area promoted divorces 'like those in the diaspora' (Guti 2011).

These teachings on migrating as couples are not always readily practiced given the double-rootedness of many Zimbabwean migrants (Muzvidziwa 2010). Muzvidziwa

defines double-rootedness as holding on to the concept of 'home' while simultaneously being located in a foreign setting. For in-migrant women in urban areas of Zimbabwe, home implies a connection with some rural place. For international migrants, home means Zimbabwe. Such structuring of families cushioned them against economic insecurity as it allowed families to explore livelihood opportunities in different economic settings. A study conducted by Chereni (2014a), on decision-making among Zimbabwean transnational families who attended ZAOGA/FIFMI, shows that a large sample of husbands left their wives and children in Zimbabwe when they moved to South Africa. South Africa's immigration policies also limited opportunities for family and spousal migration, especially low-skilled temporary migrants that were generally under-qualified to access work permits (Olivier 2009). This resulted in high statistics of irregular migration, which limited prospects for gainful employment by migrants as well as chances to relocate as families. This resulted in more men migrating than women, what Dodson (2000) calls gender-selective migration. However, as I present below, ZAOGA/FIFMI's doctrine regarding the above issues is not always straightforward.

Modernity and tradition: the blurred boundaries

Despite attempts to break from traditional practices, there were 'echoes' of tradition (Biri 2012) that continued to inform how members' social life should be structured. While marriage rituals of brideprice payment are associated with ancestor veneration, the practice has been retained by the church (Mate 2002) (see Van de Kamp and Van Dijk (2010) for similar observations in Mozambique and Botswana). ZAOGA teachings regarding female subordination converged with Shona traditional practices regarding similar issues. Through their teachings, Guti and his wife Eunor portrayed women's submission to their husbands as an expectation from God (Guti 2006). Based on her study of women's ministries of ZAOGA and Family of God (FOG), another Zimbabwean Pentecostal church, Mate (2002, p.449) argues that "these organisations focus on domesticity as a way of setting born-again women apart from other women, as a sign of their modernity and faith. However . . . the teachings simultaneously tighten the patriarchal grip on women". Analysing Mate's exploration of Pentecostalism and discourses of femininity in Zimbabwe, Engelke (2010, p.184) observes that "any desire to

break with the past has to be understood as both discursive and strategic". It is discursive because it is a continuous process. It is also strategic in that definitions of what a 'modern' Christian is are not universal, since "one person's modern Christian is another person's traditional African" (Engelke 2010, p.184). As Engelke points out, Mate's analysis is important for understanding the ways in which rupture and realignment occur simultaneously as people map out their identities. This demonstrates that the boundaries between the born again believers and the world are porous.

It is also both a traditional and Christian expectation for a woman to have many children. So, when a wife suddenly stopped conceiving, even after having a child before, church members or fellow women pray to exorcise the demon causing the problem (Mate 2002). Mate presents a story about a woman who was taunted by her in-laws for failing to conceive a second child for seven years. They would call her *mukadzi wesadza* (a wife whose role is to eat food, *sadza*, only). When she finally fell pregnant after many prayer sessions, fellow Gracious Women advised her that it went against traditional teaching to talk about a pregnancy, as this would attract evil eyes. However, the woman told them that she had nothing to fear since she had God on her side.

The church also conveniently explained to international connections and donors that its operations were in accordance with local social, political and economic landscape. According to Maxwell (2002a), ZAOGA/FIFMI also carved out its own doctrine on poverty and wealth. This included direct control of international donors and connections by Guti and his immediate family. Monetary gifts were accepted without popular knowledge and put to specific uses in church. Guti was strongly against the 'Third World Mentality' of relying on missionaries for church sustenance, arguing that the movement had to generate its own money. He explained the cause of poverty in terms of curses from one's ancestors. This 'spirit of poverty' had to be driven out of born-again through deliverance and through the working of Talents⁵, particularly by women. Sometimes these women raised more money for church projects than was raised externally. The church's foreign connections and donors kept a low profile. They were told that ZAOGA/FIFMI was

⁵ See Chapter One

‘indigenous’, run by “indigenous workers who know how to handle the situation in their country” (Maxwell 2002a, p.317). Maxwell (2002a, p.317) argues that “while Southern African Pentecostals have an existential and ideological aversion to ‘tradition’, they nevertheless foster specific notions of authenticity in specific contexts to gain resources and political capital”.

Although ZAOGA had a standard Pentecostal tone, its teachings and management styles “remained specific and attuned to local and regional contexts” (Maxwell 2002a, p.316). What also made the church distinctive was the personality cult around Guti. Biri (2012) notes that church members were taught to pray to the ‘God of Ezekiel Guti’, and to celebrate Guti’s life. Members made pilgrimages to Guti’s former residence in Highfields, and to Bindura mountain, the ‘mythical’ birthplace of ZAOGA, and the bushes of Mutema Ngaaone in Chipinge, Guti’s rural home (Biri 2014b). In Biri’s view, the use of Guti and his icons represented a re-vitalisation and re-sacralisation of traditional religion.

Surrounding nations were also taught about the movement’s *sacred history*, which was documented in a book with the same title. The book is a “canonized narrative of the spiritual autobiography of Ezekiel Guti” (Maxwell 2002a, p.324). New assemblies were encouraged to annually recite the synchronised version of the sacred history, thus “bringing about the imagination and embodiment of the transnational community in text and performance” (Maxwell 2002a, p.325). While it was not possible to ‘home-grow’ leaders of ZAOGA’s transnational branches, they could at least be “drawn into the movement’s Zimbabwean core for re-formation” (Maxwell 2002a, p.325). The leaders were invited for training at the church’s Bible School in Harare. The Bible School with a rigorous diet of worship, prayer and doctrine, placements in evangelistic and pastoral activities, and general work was a “powerful homogenizing force” (Maxwell 2002a, p.325).

Biri (2012, p.1) argues that culture and traditional religion still frame ZAOGA/FIFMI’s activities and remain sources of purpose and meaning, “manifesting in their theology and rituals in spite of the adversarial stance”. African traditional religions and cultures (ATRs) continue to inform Pentecostals’ perceptions and quest for the power of miracles and healing. Some believers have remained rooted in both Pentecostalism and various forms

of cultural practices, despite their disavowal of the latter. For Biri (2012), ATRs represent a 'silent but echoing voice' among Pentecostals given its resilience. Regarding the healing practices of ZAOGA, narratives from Maxwell's (Maxwell 1998) research participants at the University of Zimbabwe provide an illustrative example. They saw similarities between the 'bogus technique' of exorcising evil spirits used by ZAOGA when they came to the University of Zimbabwe for the 1995-6 Talents conference and those employed by healer-prophets from *Vapostori* (Apostolic) sects, which consisted of shaking the head of their client until he fainted with dizziness. Biri argues that certain aspects of ATRs appear to be in decline although they remained dynamic in ZAOGA and are expressed in various ways.

Guti's rural upbringing influenced his anti-rural message on the impact of witchcraft, tradition, and ancestral spirits in relation to a born again's spirituality (Maxwell 1998). Maxwell (1998) observes that while the practice of demonising spirit possession and worship of ancestors by most Pentecostal churches is not new, ZAOGA's attack is far more wide ranging and systematic. ZAOGA argues for a "complete break from tradition - not just the world of spirits - but the whole culture of commensality. Communal rituals associated with rites of passage; defence against illness, infertility and misfortune; or the organisation and successful practice of agriculture are completely shunned" (Maxwell 1998: 358). Maxwell summarises ZAOGA's teaching on tradition in the following fashion:

Africans stay poor, not because of structural injustice, but because of a Spirit of Poverty. Even though they are born again, only their soul has in fact been redeemed. Ancestral spirits, along with their pernicious influence, remain in their blood. These ancestors were social and economic failures during their own lifetimes. Believers' male ancestors led lives of violence, indolence, drunkenness, polygamy, ancestor veneration and witchcraft: lives of waste and poverty, rather than accumulation (Maxwell 1998: 358).

They explain the experience of failure to accumulate: the car that always breaks down; buying a shirt only for it to be burnt by the iron, and; never being able to make productive use of money. Such misfortunes are believed to follow generations via demonic ancestral

spirits. While such doctrine and teachings on accumulation resonate with Guti's Apostolic Faith Mission forebears, they stem from first hand social experience where FIFMI arose. "They derive from a collection of gifted, but marginalised urban artisans struggling for recognition and respectability" (Maxwell 1998: 358).

While the ZAOGA/FIFMI's doctrine "provide[s] a pattern for coming to terms with, and benefitting from, modernities' dominant values and institutions" (Maxwell 1998, p.351), the church still maintains a particular doctrine that defines it as a church vis-à-vis external social relations. These values pertain to choices of association, women's dignity, sexual matters, and forms of entertainment. On the one hand, modernity brings better prospects to prosper materially, to drive nice cars, to live in beautiful houses, to wear fashionable clothes (Guti 2009), to empower women in many aspects of life in the family (Biri 2015), to use modern media technology to increase global reach (Togarasei 2012), and to retool secular music to make it safe for Christian consumption (Biri 2012). On the other hand, modernity increases members' chances of connecting with 'wrong' associations (through social media), and of devising wealth-generating strategies that deviate from the church's fundamental values. Meyer (2004, p.460) has pointed out that while wealth and prosperity can be blessings from God, they are also diabolic temptations that can promote unhealthy "crude consumptive behaviour" more than the 'moral-self'. Meyer (1998a, p.759) believes that Pentecostalism offers its followers the lenses through which to make sense of the changing world and to "address both modernity's malcontents and its attractions".

A study that focuses on the everyday social experiences of members who are at different levels of Christian faith is important in that it brings out the members' struggles and successes in drawing the line between the good and the ugly faces of modernity. What are the chances that modernity will increase members' risks of sinning or transgressing church, and by implication, biblical doctrines as they pursue its benefits? The instruction to 'fear not' and 'sin not' is not taken lightly by ZAOGA/FIFMI members as it was communicated to Guti personally by God when the ministry was just starting (Guti 2011). This has remained the motto of the ministry and significantly frames the church's moral values and ethics (Biri 2014b). This personal communication also sets Guti apart for God's work (Muyambo & Machingura 2014) and gives him uncontested significance and

authority in ZAOGA (Biri 2014b). In this regard, the church, through its leadership structures, sermons and various ministry-based educational programmes, has worked hard to make sure that members maintain their devotion to church doctrines.

Some have argued that research on migrants' social relations should contextualise those relationships (McKether et al. 2009, p.155). This is important for understanding how migrants carve out experiences of belonging and practices of self-exclusion and navigate life both within and outside church-based social spaces (Chereni 2014a; Landau & Freemantle 2010). Although his focus was largely on transnational connections, Chereni (2014a) demonstrated that social class was one of the factors that informed migrants' modes of association. Social class was closely related to immigration status, and many low-skilled, illegal immigrants had limited opportunities to make friendship outside the church. They retained the same social networks – usually family relations and friends – that facilitated their migration. When they needed material assistance they also looked for old friends or fellow church members. However, migrants who were more educated or who came to South Africa for tertiary education usually had legal travel documents and more choices of friendship and associational life in general. While they may have reconnected with friends from Zimbabwe for a while, they usually ended up with other friends from their workplaces or colleges where they were studying.

Chereni (2014a) provided one example of Rose, a Zimbabwean migrant and member of FIFMI whose close relationships were neither members of her extended family nor FIFMI, but South Africans she met at college and work. Such South African friends were sometimes more helpful than fellow church members in assisting their Zimbabwean friends and former college mates to look for jobs. Thus, economic insecurity was an important factor in determining the ways in which college educated migrants inserted themselves in local networks. In addition, being on the same level of education meant that Rose and her South African friends could 'talk the same language' (Chereni 2014a). Patricia, one of Rose's South African friends, was dear to her because she (Patricia) of her openness. In Rose's view, this openness, coupled with the material support she received from her, was a more important consideration than religious, ethnic or national background. Chereni's analysis of FIFMI migrants' close ties managed to "generate

evidence of fixity and embeddedness of that person in relations of belonging at destination, not just in the country of origin" (Chereni 2014a, p.21).

Conclusion

While the expansion of FIFMI ministry has been aided by a number of factors, migrant labour to Southern Rhodesia is one of the key factors. Some migrants from neighbouring countries who converted to ZAOGA during their stay in Southern Rhodesia went on to establish branches in their countries of origin. In the early stages of the church, methods of evangelism were modest, though they became grander as the movement secured more resources. Despite this, members who plan to establish branches still use one-on-one campaigns as part of laying the groundwork. Beginning in the late 1990s, Zimbabwe's economic and political challenges also helped the numerical growth of ZAOGA within Zimbabwe. More people converted to the church in search of solutions to the numerous challenges they were facing. High literacy levels among Zimbabweans together with the advancement in media technology also worked in favour of the movement's expansion efforts. As the church expanded to become transnational, Ezekiel Guti managed to carve out a name for himself in the sacred history of the church through various acts. His lifestyle became a yardstick for how economic and social life should be lived. Would-be migrants and migrants were taught to emulate Guti's moral and economic conduct when he left Zimbabwe to study in the US. Among these values were the importance of working hard for the church and remembering to return home. Guti also prepared himself for a transnational Christian mission by learning English, and studying in the US where he could connect with invaluable human and financial resources. Since migration was constructed as a Christian mission, members had to demonstrate their moral supremacy and to convert as many locals as possible. This was not always possible since migrants had to navigate multiple obstacles and prejudices.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SALT RIVER ASSEMBLY

Introduction

FIFMI in Salt River does not have written records about its history and how it developed. In order to come up with this data, I had to engage in conversations with various church members. While the nature of data obtained this way has its own limitations regarding reliability and validity, its strength lies in that it is grounded in the everyday social experiences of the congregants, which is the main focus of my study. The data highlights the agency demonstrated by individual believers during the Christian conversion process and the spontaneity of multiple ethnic social encounters that followed from such a process. Much of the data I present here came largely from five congregants, Bernard, Baluleke, Zakeo, Tanya and Elder Moto, whose membership in FIFMI, Salt River, dates back to the early stages of its founding. Elder Moto and Zakeo are two of the pioneers of the Salt River assembly while Baluleke, Tanya and Bernard joined the church when it was still less than a year old. When I interviewed them I learnt that their stories regarding the history of the assembly did not vary significantly. For this reason, I present a collated version of what I obtained from them, intermittently pointing out when there were variations in their accounts.

On the 30th of October, 2015, I visited Bernard, one of the first members to attend FIFMI. Bernard is in his late twenties and is single, although he is in a committed relationship with a woman who also attends FIFMI. When I first visited him, Bernard was living in Mowbray, one of the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, and operating a shuttle service. Most of his clients were low- to middle-income earners who worked at Century City and usually finished work late at night. He is a first generation Zimbabwean migrant who serves in the church's media department. Bernard came to Cape Town in September, 2008, when FIFMI's Salt River branch had just been founded. It had about seventy members, whom he still vividly remembers. When he came there were just three fully operational assemblies of FIFMI in the whole of Cape Town: Khayelitsha, Dunoon, and Cape Town City centre assemblies. Other assemblies in Fish Hoek and Malmesbury had just started.

Since the Salt River Assembly was founded, it has relocated several times. It started in Wynberg, a Southern suburb of Cape Town, and given its physical proximity to a retirement home, church members were requested by the owner of the building they rented not to make a lot of noise. Because of this, choir practices and other mid-week church services were conducted at selected members' houses. Since the members were still few, they could afford to use a relatively small space. Bernard recalled that some of the mid-week services used to be conducted at the house of Mrs. Moto, who is now a church elder. The same Mrs. Moto used to take Pastor Lawrence to church because by then he did not have his own car. Pastor Lawrence was the assembly's first pastor. In May, 2008, another pastor, Pastor Divine, joined him. The same year Pastor Lawrence was transferred to another branch, leaving Pastor Divine to run the assembly. When Bernard arrived in Cape Town in September, 2008, he was invited by Pastor Divine to stay with him.

As the church continued to grow, it had to look for a bigger building to accommodate its membership. So, the assembly moved to a venue close to the Wynberg Sports Club. After a while it moved to a place called Big Road Primary School. Being one of the first members to attend the Salt River branch, Zakeo, a married man with one child, also recalls that almost every member of the church was allocated a role to play. As he says:

You would know that if you are not leading prayer then you have to actively participate in any other means, because we were very few. Sometimes we would rotate duties. For instance, if today I am the master of ceremony then next time someone else takes over and you are assigned to lead a devotion. But now it is a bit different because it is now a big church. You can even spend a year *usina kutombooneka* (without getting noticed).

However, as membership increased to about 300, proper church structures were instituted. Unlike when only a few members and the pastor were running the affairs, more elders and deacons were introduced to assist in managing the church. By the time FIFMI moved from Mountain Road, it had about forty church elders and thirty deacons.

Changing venues: religion as noise?

Here I present a brief history of the church to show that changing venues entailed new encounters, new neighbours, new rules, and sometimes new residential locations. It also came with mixed responses from the residents of the area where the church was relocating to. Some neighbours complained of the ‘noise’ from the church’s music while others welcomed the noise and were converted. I then discuss how social power informed this construction of what was defined as noise and what was not.

Besides numerical growth and the need for a bigger venue, the congregants I spoke to cited noise as driving them to relocate. In some areas, the problem was made to appear worse by the church’s physical proximity to, for instance, the retirement home for white people where the residents needed a serene environment. In general, FIFMI has a tradition of being vibrant. This happened even during practice sessions when the music team prepared for Sunday services or for inter-church concerts. In this regard, the Salt River assembly was no different from other assemblies elsewhere.

Since FIFMI did not have its own permanent building, the structures it rented were often designed for purposes other than for church functions. Some were even warehouses and were not soundproof. Baluleke lamented this anomaly. He said that if you don’t have permanent buildings and rely on hiring you are bound to face many problems. As he noted “A building which is designed to be a warehouse and a building intended to be a church are totally different. When something is designed for a church they make it soundproof, sound will not go out. Even if it goes out it will not be too much”. Unlike Trovalla’s (2015) observation about churches and mosques in Nigeria, FIFMI was fighting hard to keep sound within the walls of the church. As Trovalla (2015, p.308) argues, "At churches and mosques, all competing for Jos’s soundscape, broadcasting their powers as loudly as possible, people’s activities and wishes are enhanced by the sound from the loudspeakers". Through the use of loudspeakers, the prayers of mosques and churches "can travel and cross almost any visual obstruction in a way that makes it very hard to escape their messages" (Trovalla 2015, p.309). As a result of this, some people were

placed in the midst of action through what Trovalla calls the ‘omni-directionality’ of sound (Trovalla 2015, p.309).

Baluleke believed that in Zimbabwe people did not mind noise because they respected churches. What also made noise to be of concern to the congregants was that some religious groups which are not Christian made noise and people did not complain. The reason that was given for this by the congregants was that, unlike FIFMI, other religious groups, and also non-religious institutions, had a lot of money. Because of this, they had power to determine where, when and how they wanted to perform their activities. Church members such as Baluleke opined that if you have money, you can even use it to influence certain sections of society such as gays and lesbians to be converted to church.

The problem of lack of money also meant that if the venue they were using was of high quality, the church would face competition from private colleges and other religious institutions when their lease agreement expired and they wanted to renew it. Thus, at one point the church had settled comfortably on a floor in a high-rise building when the owner of the complex announced that he would be selling the entire building. The blocks above the church had already been bought by a private college. In order to create a quiet environment conducive for studying, the college wanted to buy the entire complex. Faced with competition and having been financially outcompeted for the Corner Stone venue, the church had to move to where we they are now in Salt River. The overall view from the congregants was that the place is appropriate and big enough. Its location is central, and people from town (Cape Town) were also close to church.

What is so objectionable about loud music in church? It is not just the fact of it. I find it important here to engage not with the fact of the loud music, but the anthropology of the senses. Research on orality is helpful to understand the dynamics at play (Feld 2005; Hirschkind 2006; Trovalla 2015). Charles Hirschkind’s *The Ethical Soundscape* (2006) offers an ethnographic study of the circulation of sermon cassettes in Cairo and how this has transformed the political geography of Cairo in a profound way and punctuated the daily routines of many men and women. Hirschkind points out that listeners of the sermon tapes believed that tapes “allow a relaxed attentiveness from which one can nonetheless

expect an ethical therapeutics, a cathartic and purifying operation on the soul, a strengthening of the will, and the ability to resist what in some traditions of Islam are called "the devil's whispers". Hirschkind explains the relationship between cassettes, sound, listening, and ethics in the following fashion:

Played in public transport, in shops, garages, and cafes, sermon tapes reconfigure the urban soundscape, imbuing it with an aural unconscious from which ethical reasoning and action draw sustenance. In other words, beyond their utility as a distraction from toil, such media create the intensifying sensory background for the forms of social and political life that the Islamic Revival has sought to extend. Sermon tapes enable their listeners to orient themselves within the modern city *as a space of moral action*, with its characteristic challenges, threats and daily problems (Hirschkind 2006, p.22, emphasis in original).

In this case, there was a general positive reception of the sermon cassettes and their sound. FIFMI presented a different case, as sound's penetration into spaces beyond the church, both private and public, was not intended to be consumed by people outside the church. When it did penetrate these spaces, according to congregants' interpretation of the complaints from non-congregants, perceived to be an invasion of people's freedoms. In this regard, conflict was over how far sound travelled beyond the church into other people's physical spaces, which, in the case presented above, was a retirement home. Viewed this way, sound was boundary making, not in terms of framing sociality but in terms of imagined landscapes of influence. In the Nigerian city of Jos, Ulrika Travolla (2015) presents that churches and mosques placed loudspeakers high up on the exterior of their buildings, making them a system of 'evangelising the neighbourhood'. This use of religious loudspeakers generated resentment and social friction between the residents of the city.

At the same time, the complaints that FIFMI was 'making noise' reflected, according to the congregants, not only the intensity of sound but also the intensity of the relationship between the church and the social groups complaining. Had the noise been made in Zimbabwe where people respected churches, the congregants lamented, it would have

been accepted. But in certain residential locations of Cape Town, the noise from the church was, as Peter Bailey (1996) suggests, ‘sound out of place’, in the same way that Mary Douglas defined dirt as ‘matter out of place’.

While there were complaints about FIFMI making noise, there were some religious groups that were still sanctioned to make noise. Regarding inconsistent responses to sound, Weiner (2013) believes that sound is annoying because it often gets too loud, but also because of who has made it, and the context in which it is made. As Weiner puts it, complaints about noise are as much about unwanted noises as they are about unwanted noisemakers. Dominant groups often complain about noise as a ploy to delineate outsiders to the community, to curb opposition, and to ostracise others. Such complaints also serve to assert control over urban spaces, and to define proper forms of behaviour and social position of others. Constructed this way, noise is an index of ethnic, racial, class and religious differences.

While conflict, both subtle and overt, characterised some responses to the presence of FIFMI from some residents, the church continued to grow. In Simmel’s (1991) view, while human beings construct boundaries that suppress and exclude, they also defy the same boundaries that they impose and are imposed on them. Within the same neighbourhoods where people complained about noise, there were some who interpreted the noise in a different way and came to be a part of it. They responded to the ‘promises in the preaching’ (Landau 2009), deconstructed the social boundaries erected by fellow neighbours, and became members of the peregrinating preachers and their followers. This also resonates with the observation by Hansen and his colleagues (2009) that, in the sight of South African citizens, migrants are both a source of envy and resentment. This mixed feeling emanated from the belief that migrants possess spiritual power which many ordinary South Africans no longer have (Hansen et al. 2009).

At a more abstract level, we saw the interaction of a multiplicity of forces that shaped the way FIFMI operated. At one point, competition for scarce infrastructure forced the church to move, having lost the building to a college that had more financial resources than the church. This loss left the congregants bitter about the way ‘the world’ seems to

outcompete them in accessing the best resources that ideally should be used to promote church growth. This points to “complex intersections of economic activity with extra-economic relationships and cultural practices, which challenge long-established ideas . . . about the market’s assumed independence from [religious and] social bonds and solidarities” (Karner & Parker 2011, p.360). It also brought social actors (gays and lesbians) into the picture who were believed to have more financial resources than the church. While these social actors were resented for not being on the side of the church, they were also seen as a potential pool of converts who, if the church had ‘a lot of money’, would be invited to the church’s social functions with the hope of converting them. Here we see that if these social and economic resources were available, the ultimate aim would be to make converts. In this regard, the Christian-non-Christian social divide would be deconstructed by the ‘moral mission’ and “desire to bring progress and improvement” (Van der Veer 2002, p.167).

Structure of the church

Like other Pentecostal churches, FIFMI has age and gender-based ministries. Here I describe their formal functions as officially defined by the church. Outside Zimbabwe, these ministries normally perform similar functions as those in Zimbabwe, albeit with minor variations in titles to reflect the environment in which they operate.

The Women’s Ministry is defined as the “backbone of the church especially in intercession and financial support for the building projects through the working of Talents” (see Chapter One) (FIFMI 2011d). It was founded in March 1989 and was named ‘Go Quickly’ and later renamed to ‘Go Quickly and Tell’ in keeping with its focus on spreading the gospel. It was a vision given to Guti that liberating women to fully engage in preaching the word would result in the church growing in numbers and in holiness (Guti 2011). The idea was for women to reach out to fellow women in the world and to expose the secrets of the heart. Successes included some established church members bringing their charms to be burnt. Others were delivered from the demons of bitterness, unforgiving spirits and witchcraft. As the ministry grew numerically, it expanded to other countries,

rebranding itself to fit different contexts. In Cape Town, the ministry is called 'Women of Integrity'.

The ministry also aimed "to deliver women from the mentality of believing that they were second class citizens and good for nothing and yet women are the image of God and the word of God in Galatians [3: 28] says that in Christ there is neither male or female" (Guti 2011, p.121). The aims of the women's ministry include to raise the general standard of women's life and; to enhance women social status. The ministry also gathered at designated centres across the globe, usually on Tuesdays, to pray for the leadership of the church, for themselves and for the nation. In Harare, Zimbabwe for example, women fill the tabernacle at the church's bible school, the Africa Multination for Christ College (AMFCC), interceding and praying. An average of 2,000 women gather every Tuesday. How these meetings were structured varied from assembly to assembly across the countries. Besides prayer, women were taught to be good wives, good housekeepers and good helpers to their husbands. A woman is expected to have a "sweet spirit in herself that she may gain respect from her husband, children, workmates, neighbors, and society at large" (FIFMI 2011d).

Women were also taught issues such as "cooking, housecleaning, proper ironing, baking, how to be in good books with in-laws, exercise, hospitality, health care for the face and body" (FIFMI 2011). They were also taught how to "dress and stand before men and how to preach like a woman of God, remembering to be a preacher in the church but be a wife and mother at home" (Guti 2011, p.121). In 1984, Eunor Gutti, Ezekiel Gutti's wife, started the Gracious Woman's Fellowship to help women address various family problems through prayer, counselling, sharing and helping one another. This started with small meetings in homes and hotels until it spread to South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and the United Kingdom. It was constituted by women of various marital statuses. Gutti believed that the problems couples faced could be solved if women were to be educated and knew their place in the community (Mate 2002). Members also meet and share their problems through testimonies, and are prayed for and counselled by female leaders. The organisation took on the role of 'surrogate aunts', who used to be valued for their teachings on marital and other issues, especially to a young woman who was about to

get married. While it claims to be interdenominational, its teachings largely derive from the life and experiences of Guti and his wife (Mate 2002). Speakers often focus on issues around social relations, family life and personal well-being.

In order to come up with relevant teachings, prayer and counseling sessions and general life orientation skills for single women, a Single Women's Ministry was created. FIFMI defines a single woman as "a single parent, who is either divorced, was widowed, has a child but was not married or is childless (sic) and just unwilling to be married" (FIFMI 2011d). Prayer and counseling services are conducted to "restore their dignity and self-esteem", "encourage them to be God fearing and to wait upon Him," and to "encourage rebuilding of family relationships (with children, in-laws etc.) where they have been affected" (FIFMI 2011d). Some of these teachings have been critiqued. For instance, Biri (2014b) gives the example of how single women (widows and divorcees) are required to conduct themselves in a manner that does not spark suspicion of indulging in sexual immorality. This entails placing them under the supervision and surveillance of an 'umbrella', that is, a pastor (usually male) who oversees the welfare of single ladies and advises them on various issues of life. Just as a real umbrella protects its owner from excessive heat and rains, so does an 'umbrella pastor' shield single women from the vicissitudes of life. Single women are encouraged to visit their umbrella pastor regularly. This, in Biri's (2014b) view, gives the impression that single women are not capable of making choices on their own.

In 1991, 'Men of Integrity' was started for married men to be taught how to live in their families (Guti 2007). In Cape Town, as elsewhere, this group regularly organises fellowships where they sometimes invite professionals in various fields to develop men's integrity in the areas of finance, intimacy in marriage, and serving God through active participation in church. In addition to the age and gender-based ministries, which I focus on in this thesis, there are ministries that are open to all church members, such as the church choir, cell groups and, at the Salt River assembly, the FIFMI men's football team. The men's football team is open to all men who are interested in football.

There are four other ministries that are not so active across all FIFMI branches, especially outside Zimbabwe. The Ezekiel Guti Evangelistic Association (EGEA) is a team of

evangelists that travels mainly around Zimbabwe preaching. It also comprises the church's print and broadcasting media, the former being the church's Christian bookstores, while the latter is the church's television channel (Ezekiel TV) (FIFMI 2011b). EGEA was launched in 1957 by the prayer band that was praying for Ezekiel Guti (Guti 2011). The Blind and Sighted Integration Ministry aims to promote self-reliance projects for blind people in Zimbabwe through various donations. It was a product of the vision Guti had in 1990 when God revealed to him that the blind were rejected and neglected in the community, yet God had a special place for them (FIFMI 2011a). The Disabled Helping Hand Association was founded by FIFMI in June 1992 in Zimbabwe. In addition to preaching to people with physical disabilities, the association runs a village – a multipurpose hall, mini supermarket and accommodation hall – at Murambinda Growth Point where the former live and engage in self-help projects. The Foreign Missions has its base in Zimbabwe but receives funding from the Forward in Faith assemblies across the world to send missionaries (pastors, elders, deacons) to preach to all nations (FIFMI 2011c). In describing the functions of these ministries, the official website of the church focuses on the more official, religious or spiritual side, and not on social activities. The visions for the establishment of all these ministries are traced to the founder of the church. It is also not within the scope of this study to provide a detailed ethnographic exposition of these ministries.

Associational life in the Salt River Assembly

Social activities were conducted both as ministry-based and together as a church. For example, when the men's soccer team played, they extended the invitation to every church member to come and support them. Family fun days were for the whole church, and they were usually conducted in public parks or gardens or at the beach. Cell group parties were for all members of the church who lived in a certain residential section of the city, regardless of age or gender. Some ministries such as the choir and the church's football club were cross-cutting. Members came from different generations and genders.

There was a blurred separation between social structure and other official structures meant to run more formal church business, such as leading prayer meetings, organising

conferences and preaching on Sundays. People who organised social activities were usually the same people who led more formal activities. This is because social activities often took place concurrently with other more formal church functions, such as when a married man's braai outing was accompanied by a seminar on how men should manage finances in a way that showed that they were members of FIFMI. At a Men of Integrity braai session conducted in September 2014 at Pastor Lawrence's house, an hour-long talk was strategically slotted when the members had just started the feast. The talk was given by a member of the church, and who happened to be a professional financial advisor who worked for one of the largest financial holdings in South Africa. The teaching interweaved Bible verses with principles on financial management. Similarly, a braai session for families on a Saturday came with a teaching on principles on maintaining a Godly marital relationship. The same applied for family fun days, cell group parties and couples dinners. For instance, at one of the cell group parties I attended, the day began with a word of prayer from a church elder, who was also part of the leadership of that cell group. It was then followed by braaing and games that were carefully chosen to promote the participation of all age groups, except infants. Before the day was concluded, there was about thirty minutes of exhortation by the elder who had opened the day with prayer.

Elders in church were also elders at the sports fields and on a WhatsApp football chat group. When there was a misunderstanding between team members, the elders and deacons would quickly exercise their authority to instil discipline. Also, football was mixed with faith, such that the only news allowed on the men's WhatsApp football group was that of football and the Bible. Politics was always avoided, though this was not always followed by all members of the group. However, members who failed to abide by group rules (set by the leaders of the football team and the patrons) were reprimanded. Failure to repent resulted in removal from the group. Again, expulsion was seen by the leaders as temporary, and if the misbehaving member apologised to any of the leaders, he, in the spirit of brotherly love, would be allowed to rejoin the group.

FIFMI strongly emphasised discipline, especially among the youth, the second generation migrants. Besides engaging in worldly entertainment, the youth, but also grown-ups, were at risk of transgressing church rules. While their vibrancy was important for a quick

adjustment into the South African socio-economic environment, it was also a potential source of spiritual downfall. FIFMI placed emphasis on the re-socialisation of young males who were ‘born again’. They had to stop smoking, drinking alcohol, being violent and abusing their wives (Maxwell 1998). Transgressors were publicly disgraced. Church leaders could be suspended or excommunicated, depending on the offence committed. What comes into mind is the case of Carol Mujokoro, pastor and director of music at ZAOGA’s EGEA Ministries. She was suspended in January 2017 following the allegation that she had violated church rules in the way she handled a case regarding the recording of her musical album with the church’s recording studio (Chapanduka 2017). Mujokoro had filed a lawsuit of US\$10 000 against ZAOGA after a DVD she recorded with EGEA on 5 February 2015 went missing. In an effort to get the matter resolved, Blessing, Carol’s husband, engaged the assistance of lawyers. This was not taken lightly by the church, which accused Carol of seeking help from outsiders (lawyers) (Chapanduka 2017).

Church services sometimes doubled as ‘mini-carnivals’ presided over by the leaders of the church. This ‘carnival atmosphere’ was not simply due to the usual singing and dancing, but rather due to the ‘social’ events that preceded or followed the main service. On one Sunday service of September 2014, branded ‘Sacrificial Sunday’, the church was soliciting money to buy a mission house that would accommodate the district pastor. The pastor delivered a sermon that tied with the overall goal of extraordinary, sacrificial giving. Church leaders were invited to take the initiative to sacrifice and set the bar for others. In that regard, pastors, church elders, deacons, treasurers stood in front of the whole congregation, publicly announcing, through the master of ceremony, how much they would be contributing and when they would be doing so. The rest of the church followed, coming row by row as ushers directed them.

After everyone had had an opportunity to sacrifice, all the names were recorded and the finance department gathered the offering baskets to assess the fruits of the sacrifice. There were immediate rewards for those who had out-given others. Towards the end of the service, the master of ceremony collated the names of those who had given more than others. Suddenly the atmosphere changed from being tense to being carnival-like and jovial. Once a person’s name had been called out, in ascending order of the amounts

given, they moved to the front of the church where the church treasurer would present them with a wrapped parcel. They then smiled for a photo shoot with the pastor before making their way back to their respective seats. The highest giver, the 'big fish', was presented with a trophy, which a couple of congregants were enviously eager to get a hold of as they posed for a group photo, all in a jovial mood.

In between the sermon, the pastor announced that the following Sunday would be a deliverance Sunday, in which all afflicted with demons, financial incapacity, and impotence would be set free. He implored the would-be freedom seekers to prepare themselves for the service by way of fasting from Friday up to the Sunday in question. The same day at the end of the service, the chairperson for the Men of Integrity group moved around collecting R50.00 dues for a 'braai fellowship' that would double as a seminar on finance to be held on the Saturday between the sacrificial Sunday and the deliverance Sunday (14 September), that is, on the 13th of September.

Religious versus social hierarchy

Although I indicated above that church leaders sometimes carried their titles to social activities such as football matches, religious hierarchies did not always determine social hierarchies. Different contexts often defined hierarchies in complex ways. When church members participated in social gatherings, religious hierarchies were simultaneously reaffirmed and temporarily suspended. In most of the social gatherings I attended, formal church ranks accorded pastors, elders, and deacons did not always translate into high positions and status in social outreach programmes and activities. Activities such as barbecues, family fun days, and couples fellowships provided platforms for the temporary reconfigurations of hierarchies. This could be through such seemingly insignificant things as not allocating a special chair and place for senior church officials. This was in contrast to official church activities where church leaders had front row seats reserved for them. At the same time, the pastor was allocated a special bottle of juice and a plate of braai meat.

Here, I also give an example of a men's fellowship that was organised in 2015. The secretary and vice secretary of the Men of Integrity group were both deacons. Deacons

occupy a very respected and top position in church. Despite this, they had to be the first to arrive at the pastor's house where the activity was being conducted, start the fire, and braai the meat for less senior members. On this day, it was the leaders of Men of Integrity who had relegated themselves to the ranks of 'braai masters' while other men were relaxing and chatting. By virtue of them being leaders of the men's fellowship committee, they ideally would have been expected to delegate those positions to their subordinates. Not only were these 'braai masters' leaders of the married men's group, but they were highly educated; one of them was an academic doctor while the other had a master's degree. Contrary to this, most men who were present were of lower ranks, both in terms of church hierarchy and educational achievement, with some employed in menial jobs.

Another case in point is the family fun day held by two cell groups in December, 2014. On that day, a couple of sporting activities were organised on the spot. Just like in every sporting event, there was need for coaches and team managers to coordinate the day's events. Since the events of the day were not forethought and rehearsed, whoever proposed a potentially entertaining event automatically became the coach or coordinator of that event. For example, one of the events called 'catch-the-ball-hold-the-ball' was facilitated by a single woman in her mid-20s. All the members, including senior church officials present, formed a big single circle, with the young facilitator at the centre giving instructions on how the game was to be played: she would throw the soccer ball to one member at a time, and if she shouted 'catch the ball' then you had to do the opposite, that is, you had to head the ball. Once an 'athlete' failed the test they were instructed by the facilitator to sit down. The sequence was to be followed until only one member was left, who would then be declared the winner.

In some sporting events, more than one coordinator had to work together. For example, in the relay runs, almost every 'athlete' had a say on how the teams were to be constituted (whether or not to have teams of mixed genders and ages), where to start and end the race⁶, the distance to be covered from start to finish, who should start for the team and who should finish, and who should act as referee to officiate the relay. Paradoxically, the

⁶ There were no professional track markings to demarcate starting and finishing lines for competitors.

absence of a coordinator implied that there were many coordinators, albeit 'coordinating' somehow haphazardly. The same was to happen with marital-based 100-metre races in which married men were competing alone, while married women jostled for first position in their separate group, with single women forming their own group to battle to the finishing line. This level of 'uncoordinated coordination' was in stark contrast to the occasional social soccer games organised by men, both single and married, on Sundays after church service. Church-based social gatherings and events therefore confirmed the existence of an institutional pecking order, but these events were also a defiance of rigid definitions of religious ranks.

How much control did the church have over people?

Control over the members was exercised in many ways and by many church structures. Some ways were indirect while others were more direct. I have discussed how formal church structures doubled as social structures. This was one way of maintaining contact with the members. Another way was to make sure that congregants spent as much time in church as possible. Based on his fieldwork in Zimbabwe, Maxwell (2005) observes that Pentecostals are very religious people. Given the choice, they would spend their free time worshipping God, praying and studying the Bible. Mate (2002) observes that 'born-again' are against attending church service for a few hours on Sunday, and afterwards not living according to the dictates of the Bible. Both the social and religious lives of the believer are centred on the church through concerts, choir practices, prayer meetings, evangelistic activities, and revivals (Maxwell 1998). In my research, this intense religiosity entailed coming up with church activities throughout the week, including during the evenings. This could be cell group meetings on Wednesdays, choir practice on Saturday, social outreach activities on any day, evening prayers for married men and married women every Friday, or young generation item rehearsals in preparation for Sunday service, and the church football games on Fridays and Saturdays.

Separate programmes for married men and married women were often conducted simultaneously. For instance, when married men were conducting Friday half-night and all-night prayer sessions, married women would conduct theirs in a different venue. The

following announcement, posted on the Men of Integrity WhatsApp group on 3 February, 2015, provides evidence to this:

Dear Mol

The [Men of Integrity] committee is organising an all-night prayer for the Mol this coming Friday. You will be informed about the starting and finishing times later. The ladies will be having theirs at the church, so we will have ours at the same venue we used last time, close to our old church. We will be at the Youth Centre building which we used last time. We encourage every member to come and pray for our lives, and to hear the man of God [the District Pastor] share with us the word for 2015 (City Men of Integrity, 03/02/15).

Because some congregants were members of multiple church ministries, their lives revolved around multiple church programmes. So a married man who was also a member of the church's football team and the church choir would be expected to play a football match on Friday afternoon, join the married men's evening prayer session the same day, and attend the choir practice on Saturday afternoon. Certain times of the year were even busier than others, especially towards the end of the year, and when there was a big church conference and members had to prepare for it. For instance, a WhatsApp message on the church's football team in December 2015 had the following to say about a proposed family braai and what it meant for marriage:

This Friday we have a friendly match vs HP Baxter at Sternberg Astro Turf. . . . The following day is Saturday, our ladies will assist us in arranging an end of year family braai. The proposed braai spot is Newlands forest. We are requesting a contribution of R100 per family. You are welcome to contribute more if your spirit leads you to. Why the two events? This year we have seen God's grace in building our relationships. This is the time to appreciate each other in words regarding the impact we had on each other.

On Sundays there were usually two church services, one from morning (9 am) to afternoon (1pm) and another service later in the afternoon (around 5 pm). Sometimes members returned home between the two services. Sometimes entertainment programmes were lined up between the services, such that the whole day was spent in church. Such programmes targeted certain groups although others were open to all.

While conducting women's and men's programmes simultaneously did not always carry overtones of surveillance, some programmes were seen by some church members as limiting believers' freedom of association. For instance, widowed and divorced women were expected to conduct themselves in a manner that cleared all suspicion of engaging in unsanctioned sexual relations (Biri 2015). They were taught how to maintain the 'right' friends who would not lead them astray. This compromised their right to privacy and limited their capacity to choose a sexual partner of their choice. Part of this denial of privacy was traced to the Shona traditional expectation that a widow cannot choose a husband without the input of her late husband's close relatives. Usually, the widow had to be inherited by the deceased's brother. In order to 'restore their dignity', divorced women had to spend more time in prayer for various church projects. Like the Shona tradition, ZAOGA is strongly against divorce. Divorce was seen to strip a woman of her dignity, which was largely tied to patriarchal definitions of the family as being an institution headed by a man. The expectation for single women to be dignified adversely affected their confidence and their chances of occupying influential positions in the church (Soothill 2010).

Christian magazines and films were one way to keep members in church in between the services and to inculcate the values of the church. Young generations were largely the target of these styles of teaching. The aim was to provide Godly entertainment, and to teach young generations to abstain from sexual immorality (Musoni & Machingura 2014). On September 11, 2014, the master of ceremony for the Sunday service announced that a film, titled *Heaven is for Real*, was to be screened after church. The film would be screened in between the morning and afternoon church services, that is, around 3pm. Those who were interested in attending had to pay R25.00. Free snacks would be provided. Immediately after it was released in April 2014, *Heaven is for Real* became a

craze among many Christians, selling millions of copies within a few months. This success story was principally attributed to its message that resonated with Christian values and expectations of death, resurrection, and encounter with Jesus Christ as enshrined in the Bible. The film narrated a little boy's (Colton) experience with Jesus and angels following his near-death experience and resurrection story. Most of the members who remained to watch the film were single youths and a few elderly couples. The church occasionally organised such film 'outings', most of which targeted the youths, although all church members were welcome to attend. These teachings, through movies and other ministry-based programmes, were also meant to empower young generations against sexual abuse (Musoni & Machingura 2014). In this regard, children's ministries, through its teachers, used educational material from the Ministry of Health and NGOs to provide lessons on sex education. The church also has a manual guide on these and other issues.

There was also effort to make strong follow-ups on newcomers to church. When they arrived, their records were taken by church ushers and, after the service, they were introduced to the entire church. Before the church service, newcomers were easily noticeable by how they went straight past established church members (who usually made time for a social chat before and after the church) to the church ushers who would be waiting for them at the entrance. The ushers would record their names for official acknowledgement as 'special' people during the church service. Their first 'VIP' treatment then followed immediately after the church service when they were introduced to the assembly pastor and his wife. This took place over snacks in the comfort of the pastor's lounge. In this context, their data – marital status, where they come from, who they lived with in South Africa, membership in FIFMI – was supplied to church leaders. They were then informed about the cell group nearest to where they lived. Welcoming newcomers this way demonstrated the importance of a holy community but also facilitated the structure of follow-ups.

The visitors had differentiated status; some came with a church elder or deacon and were highly regarded. Others were transferring from one assembly of the same church. They would come with transfer letters that would be read in church to the congregation. If this category of newcomers had leadership positions in their original assemblies, and if their

letters attested to their good conduct, they immediately retained their positions. Those who had no direct connections to anyone in the church, or had no prior history of membership in the church, had to work their way up the ranks of both the religious hierarchy and spaces of sociality. Those who stayed a little bit longer after the service joined the after-church social chats in an effort to build the much-cherished social relations and connections.

FIFMI has also had to repackage some of its programmes, activities and approaches to conducting church services to attract new believers but also to retain old ones who still found worldly music appealing (see Hackett (1998) for similar observations in Nigeria). Music was one such area that was restructured. Traditional church songs were repackaged through mixing church lyrics and contemporary instrumentals. This way, the church 'overcame the world' through repossessing what supposedly was in the world, and using it to glorify God and grow the church numerically. After all, as Robert noted, "all things belong to God but the devil has externalised them for personal use, blinding people into believing that if you use mbira in church then you are practicing African Traditional Religion". Referring to Botswana and Zimbabwe, Togarasei (2012) has argued that the embrace of media technologies, such as television, radio, and the Internet have promoted the faster and wider spreading of Pentecostal churches.

This repackaging was especially necessary in the South African context, with its diverse musical genres, some of which are crossing the border into Zimbabwe. A joke that circulated amongst many Zimbabweans that black South Africans were so passionate about music that when they were in a jovial mood they sang and when they were angry – and protesting - they also sang. Since the congregants found themselves inhabiting this environment when they were in public spaces, such as the workplace and public transport, they needed to experience that environment in a church atmosphere in which the singing was done for the 'right reasons', that is, to praise God. The church was transitioning from offering songs, sermons and other programmes that only appealed to the older generation, to providing social activities that factored the needs of the younger generation. Effort was made, for instance, to mix old traditional hymns with contemporary worship songs that were more appealing to the youths. The concern was that if the church

was not innovative and vibrant enough, it risked losing church members to 'the world', that is, they would leave the church and become non-Christians. So, the environment had its own influence on the ways in which FIFMI functioned. Although ideally religion presupposes a subscription to shared belief systems and practices, Roof (1993) believes that many religious organisations have over the years been transformed, such that some often have 'multilayered beliefs and practices'. Because of this transformation, which to some extent is a result of modernity, many churches have attempted to retain members by offering both contemporary and traditional worship services (Bruhn 2011). There is also an effort to increase options by which church members can satisfy their spiritual quests through some kind of a "mix and match" (Bruhn 2011, p.189).

If people spent all this time in church, then why focus on research outside church? There are many explanations for this. One is that while the church made the effort to keep the congregants in church, not everybody attended these activities. Most members would still spend their time outside the spaces created by the church. This brings the argument for understanding the members' different levels of commitment to church activities, which I raised when I discussed the research gap that this study addresses.

Some church members were not so excited about attending church social functions because they complained about the way church awards were organised, including how awardees were selected. In December 2016, the church organised its first ever awards to honour members for various achievements across the ministries. While the event was lauded by some as a resounding success, others had reservations, ranging from a perceived lack of experience of the masters of ceremony, and the last-minute selection of awardees on the night of the event. One example was when the winner of Children's Ministry was selected based on a play that had been presented a few days before the day of the awards. This was despite the fact that the children had participated in several activities during the course of the year.

While the awards were meant to honour people across all church ministries, some ministries were omitted. At some point the pastor had to intervene to ensure order, and to include people who had been 'left out' of the winners' list but, according to popular

view, deserved to be included given the various roles they had played throughout the year. Following the awards, I had an informal conversation with a couple, deacons in church, who doubted if ever they would attend such awards. In addition to the concerns I have presented above, the couple thought there was a need to include other categories, such as the most consistent giver, and the most consistent church and cell group attendee. These categories, the couple argued, would encourage both new and established members to be more committed to church programmes.

Conclusion

FIFMI Salt River assembly has had to contend with moving from one venue to another as it looked for a venue that could accommodate its growth. In some cases, relocation has been a result of the politics and economics associated with certain venues and residential locations. While some residents conceived of the activities of the church as constituting 'noise', others were converted and became part of the movement. Like other ZAOGA/FIFMI assemblies elsewhere, the Salt River assembly has gender- and age-based ministries which are important for members' social life. Social activities conducted by these ministries were often accompanied by formal activities. As a result, the ministries were led by elders and deacons, though some activities reconfigured formal church hierarchies. The church used these ministries to ensure that members spent more time with fellow church members than outside the church. As part of the assembly's 'surveillance' effort, newcomers were expected to provide details that would make it easy for them to be followed up on. Part of this attempt included a meeting with the assembly's presiding pastor. The newcomers were also immediately introduced to their prospective fellow cell group members who were expected to phone them to remind them about their weekly meetings. Committing to every church programme was not always successful since individual congregants had their own programmes beyond those of the church. Also, not all church members appreciated the manner in which church social activities were conducted, and this discouraged them from participating in them.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONVERSION AND SOCIAL LIFE

Introduction

Situating my argument within the context of the growth of FIFMI, Salt River assembly, this chapter focuses on how Christian conversion produces moments of openness to ‘the world’ while also maintaining closed social boundaries. Notwithstanding some minor variations regarding certain events, the congregants I interviewed agreed on the main reasons that contributed, and still contribute, to the growth of the church. These include the love demonstrated by the congregants to potential and new converts, one-on-one evangelism, made possible through living an exemplary life outside the church, the role played by small church group ministries like cell groups, and the spiritual power and degree of sociability of the presiding pastor with the outside world. In these explanations for church growth, there are ambivalences regarding boundaries of everyday social relations between the congregants and prospective converts: the congregants demonstrated love even as they labelled and stereotyped them; there was emphasis on inviting South Africans, whom they commonly referred to as ‘locals’, to cell groups and church while at the same time discussing topics that drew them away (save vs avoid), and conviviality (festivities) with prospective converts took place in the backdrop of subtle conflicts. I also discuss the power dynamics that were at play in the inconsistent ways in which the ‘noise’ from the church was interpreted by outsiders.

Conversion and social relations

One of the values stressed by Pentecostal churches is limited contact with the past, such as kin who are not ‘born again’, and traditional religion. This is premised on the biblical notion that Christians should not be ‘unequally yoked’ with ‘unbelievers’. In this regard, marriage, fellowship, and business with ‘unbelievers’ should under ideal circumstances be limited. Although not implying that South Africa is predominantly non-Christian, the belief is that long-term association with ‘the world’ and its cultural traditions has the ultimate result of corrupting the good character of Christians.

Despite the stress on limited contact with kin, the realities of everyday life and the need to evangelise, among other factors, often make it unfeasible to maintain rigid boundaries based on religious affiliation. What emerges in the process of individual evangelism and everyday interaction in different spatial contexts is more than just conversion of 'unbelievers'. Rather, sustained social relations are carved out during and after the conversion process. Kristine Krause (2011) observes this in her study of transnational Christian ties within Pentecostal networks among African migrants in Germany. As Krause notes, as Pentecostals transgress cultural and geographical spaces they also develop cosmopolitan sensibilities and sociabilities. Such moments of sociabilities transcend 'benign universalisms' that emerge as African migrants work to convert people. While the ideologies of Pentecostalism contradict the notion of flexible social boundaries (Glick Schiller 2009), they, in the process of Christian conversion, often produce moments of openness (Krause 2011). For Krause (2011), focusing on Ghanaians in Germany, it is possible for Pentecostal Christianity to be simultaneously open and exclusive to the world.

The above contradictions and ambiguities regarding the conversion process are also observed by Andre Droogers (in Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001, p.48). Droogers notes that in everyday life evangelical Christians have a general tendency to present themselves in ambiguous terms in some areas; save and avoid the world, individual expression and social conformity, and spontaneity and control. These contradictions are often a response and adaptation to different situations and environments that churches find themselves in during the process of expansion into unfamiliar territories (Cazarin & Cossa 2014). Krause (2011) demonstrates that when the Christian Church Outreach Mission International (CCOMI), a Pentecostal church founded by Ghanaians in Hamburg, Germany, opened a branch in the predominantly Muslim town of Tamale in Ghana, it had to seek the support of local Muslim leaders. The need to acknowledge and coexist with different religious and ethnic groups entailed creating 'moments of openness' to such diversity. When the same church opened a branch in another area, Bolgatanga, where many converts were coming from the so-called traditional religions, the pastors had to encourage syncretic practices by keeping up respect for the local traditions. This also relates to the African Independent Churches studied in South Africa by Mike West (1972). As Landau observes concerning Pentecostal churches in South Africa, the adaptation

process also informs even the message preached, which is loaded with promises to address the challenges facing migrants. The promises in the preaching also attract South Africans, “generating one of the rare common spaces between nationals and foreigners in the city” (Landau 2009, p.209).

Focusing specifically on how Nigerian and Congolese Pentecostal pastors in Spain and South Africa mediate everyday social life, Cazarin and Cossa (2014) note that their evangelical mission is marked by paradoxes. The paradoxes relate to their stress on both modernity and tradition, present and past, and progress and conservatism. Equally, Krause (2011) believes that in the process of Christian conversion, pastors might negate and transgress divisions that are believed to exist between people of different cultures and nationalities. The pastors may also allow specifically traditional practices.

The conversion process is often constructed as a dialectic process (Hastings 1976; Maxwell 2002b). This is so because Pentecostal and charismatic churches provide “an intermediary space for members to move back and forth between the way of life they (wish to) leave behind and the one to which they aspire” (Meyer 1998b, p.339). Conversion enables the congregants to address conflicts between modern and traditional cultural forms and to focus on present and future lives as Pentecostals while also in the process of breaking with the past. In this regard, they promote notions of discontinuity while at the same time having the vestiges of continuity (Meyer 1998b; Robbins 2003; Engelke 2004; van de Kamp 2011). Maxwell (2002a) had similar observations on ZAOGA’s conversion practices in the 1950s when it was still AOGA. Regarding AOGA’s evangelism in the townships, conversion and associational life, Maxwell (2002a, p.306) noted, “The sheer numbers of people in townships facilitated evangelism as church members turned first to their kin and then to their neighbours”. Bonds with kin were being replaced by those with Christian ‘brothers and sisters’, and members shunned the popular culture of music, dance and cinema. Church members avoided secular networks for welfare provision, such as burial societies, and church life was characterised by a “strong bond of intimacy and mutuality” (Maxwell 2002a, p.306). AOGA members who returned to their rural homes converted their family members before inviting an evangelist to help found an assembly (Guti 2011). Following conversion, the new born agains would

relocate to live closer to each other, forming a community within a community. At the same time, Maxwell (2002a) highlights that while relatives were targets for evangelism they were also viewed with suspicion as a potential 'door to the devil'.

In the process of conversion, Pentecostal movements sometimes demonstrate undemocratic and exclusionary tendencies through the construction of those who are not converted as demonic (Marshall 2009). The interpretation of the demonic is often understood to imply individual moral failures and is expanded to explain a global struggle between forces of good and evil. Even those who continue to sin following conversion face varying forms of punishment, which may include expulsion, as Laurent (2001, p.342) demonstrates in his study of the faith-healers of the Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso. The various ailments treated were connected to transformations taking place in the form of the relations between the believers and their neighbours, families and friends. In ZAOGA, church leaders could be suspended or excommunicated depending on the offence committed (Chapanduka 2017). In the Brazilian Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG), pastors who were posted in Mozambique encouraged members to dis-empower and openly talk about the evil nature of ancestor spirits, something that previously was not always attempted for fear of vengeance from the spirits. Van de Kamp and Van Dijk (2010) note that Brazilian pastors strongly demonised 'traditional' customs and beliefs that were believed to stem from witchcraft and other demonic practices, commonly known by Afro-Brazilians as *macumba*. The pastors believed that Africa was the heart of evil, and this assumption was informed by the various 'demonic' styles of worship of Afro-Brazilians who were shipped to Brazil during the slave trade (Birman 2006, cited in van de Kamp & van Dijk 2010). The pastors believed that their presence in Mozambique would be instrumental in fighting this evil. Mozambicans had to be aware of their cultural past in order for them to break generational curses.

As a process, conversion takes place simultaneously with other social and political processes. This can be projects of social transformation, as Chua (2012) observed in Bidayuh, a village in Malaysian Borneo. In Bidayuh, a village in Malaysian Borneo, missionaries, following a directive from the village's private dynasty, combined conversion efforts with 'civilizing' endeavours of educating local children. This meant the missionaries

had to mix widely with local communities, familiarise themselves with the local language, rituals, and social organisation while at the same time trying to spread their message. It also meant Christianity "became a known presence in these areas well before most of their inhabitants considered 'entering' . . . it" (Chua 2012, p.515). Haynes' (2012) study in Zambia reveals that conversion was often preceded by Pentecostals displaying wealth and entering into economic relations with less-privileged non-believers. As non-believers provided various kinds of menial assistance to some more materially resourced Pentecostal neighbours, they witnessed the blessings accruing to the latter. This relationship had the potential to attract non-believers to church. In the context of migration, I explore if conversion could be conceived of as part of attempts by migrants to invite local groups to 'integrate' into their everyday life.

It has also been observed that the link between rupture and modernity vis-à-vis social relations, while justifiable and supported by strong scholarship, is not simple (Engelke 2010). What people do in everyday life sometimes does not reflect the embrace of modernity. For instance, through Pentecostalism, younger converts in urban Tanzanian born-again achieve some individual autonomy from elders without being individualistic and without deviating from the moral personhood defined through familial values (Lindhardt 2010). As Lindhardt argues, "While an assertion of individual autonomy is implied in conversion, Tanzanian born-again Christians do not cease to be social beings, deeply embedded in family relationships" (Lindhardt 2010, p.240). If anything, young converts, through Pentecostal practice, "sometimes even improve their relationships with unconverted family elders" (Lindhardt 2010, p.240). These experiences point to how Christians imagine rupture differently (Daswani 2010). As Daswani (2010) argues, while Pentecostal deliverance is important for 'untying' social bonds (Meyer 1999, cited in Daswani 2010), born-again sometimes pray for social relationships to be repaired. In addition to understanding Pentecostal negotiations of old and new worlds, it is, therefore, important to understand the "situational application of faith and Pentecostal commitment, as they emerge, through ritual bonds of kinship and prayer" (Daswani 2010, p.444). This entails exploring how everyday situations, individual choice, personal experiences, and different social environments frame experiences of continuity and discontinuity and different interpretations of the doctrine of the church (Daswani 2010).

While the scholarship I review here does not make primary reference to issues of church growth and its implications on inter-ethnic social boundaries, it points out that religion does not necessarily entail circumscription to a particular place and social context. In this chapter I built on these debates to focus on individual congregants and their role in the growth of FIFMI. I focused on the everyday realities of the evangelical practices and how they entailed ambivalent intra- and inter-ethnic social relations in diverse social contexts: at home where individual congregants engage with 'the world', at workplaces as well as in some public spaces such as parks where people meet and chat.

Methods used to evangelise

So, what effort was made by church members to invite South African citizens to church? Here I present the three main methods used by the church to promote the church's numerical growth. These are one-on-one evangelism, cell group sermons and festivities, and the spiritual power of the sitting pastor. At the level of the everyday, these methods involved a great deal of paradoxically opening and closing social boundaries between individual congregants and the Christian converts. I present below how love was practiced, but also attendant acts that seemed to contradict the same virtue that attracted and retained converts.

Of love, tradition and conversion

One of the virtues that are believed to contribute to attracting membership from local South Africans is *agape* love. This is the benevolent, goodwill, and willful delight in the object of love and was interpreted by the congregants as a demonstration of the nature of God, who often loved even the unlovable and the unlovely, as Frederick Klaitz (2010) demonstrates in his study of the therapeutic power of intimacy and caring during Botswana's HIV/AIDS pandemic. At the same time, closely tied to the notion of love was a hatred of the prospective converts' cultures, 'evil' spirits, and the 'bad' character, which had the potential to contaminate church members. In the process of saving the converts from their 'sinful' past, church members often unconsciously despised what the former held dearly and seemed to depart from the converts' understanding of how love should be expressed.

The congregants' understanding of love fits Klait's definition of love as "action and sentiment directed toward enhancing the well-being of other people" (2010, p.3). In my study, 'well-being' was in relation to the spirit of the converts, for it is the one that had to be redeemed from sin and evil. The majority of congregants I spoke with noted that love had to be demonstrated at the congregants' homes and at the workplaces where the congregants interacted with local South Africans every day. The congregants believed that once local groups were given unconditional love then their perception of churches in general would be changed. Thus, Bernard noted that during the early days of the church the members used to 'just hang out.' They would come together, say at the pastor's house, or they would go and play soccer or tennis. In this regard, Bernard added, the church became a 'community' where people were so much involved with each other than just going to church on Sunday. As he also pointed out, "You know, FIFMI and with what we have done here (referring to his relations with his flat mates), we are a family". This hanging around was inclusive of people who did not attend FIFMI. Bernard noted that when this atmosphere was created, the visitors felt loved and were encouraged to come to church. Sometimes they would start by visiting for a few days until they became permanent members of the church.

Similarly, Zakeo had the following to say about the effect of love on local groups:

. . . these guys what they believe is, uh, they will tell you that in church they just want our money. . . So, you need to convince them that you know what, we don't need your money. We need your life because God created you to worship Him. . . So we managed to win some people who are coming and witnessing the love that we have in the church, which is evidence of how the message preached by the church is being applied to real life situations. We want non-Christians to see Jesus Christ in us through the way we relate with them every day and outside the church.

To 'take Jesus to the locals,' as the congregants put it, entailed braking from the confines of the church institution and relating with the people through various acts. In this regard, my analysis of what the congregants said can be situated within the context of studies of

how people ‘live’ or practice religion in everyday life (Ammerman 2014; McGuire 2008; Schielke & Debevec 2012). Rather than believing that religion is confined to some institution or shrine somewhere, studies of lived religion argue that religion should be looked for in unexpected places. This entails acknowledging the “multilayered nature of everyday reality and the permeability of all social boundaries” (Ammerman 2014, p.189). As Ammerman (2014) argues, religion can be found in the conversational spaces – both in religious organizations and beyond – where sacred and mundane dimensions of life are produced and negotiated. As congregants applied Christian teachings to “real life situations”, as Zakeo put it, they interweaved their religious belief systems and values with other aspects of social life in mundane ways. Such ‘lived religion’ departed from grand schemes of religion that construct it as an institution that has clear-cut boundaries. (In Chapter Six I provide a more detailed discussion of this notion of ‘lived religion’ and how it can be used to understand the individual congregants’ daily life.)

Equally, Tanya spoke at length about the importance of loving some of her workmates who were not Christians while at the same time being careful not to compromise Christian principles. In Tanya’s view, loving ‘unbelievers’ should always be motivated by the evangelical mission. The majority of the people Tanya worked with were black South Africans from Kayamandi. ‘Unbelievers’ represented ‘bad company’ with the potential to corrupt her good character. Tanya believed that the reason God instructed her to work with people, most of whom were not ‘born again’, was for her to “intercede for them to be saved.” Showing them love would “soften their hardened hearts” for them to receive the word of God. She believed that Christians were the custodians of God’s love. “If you do not express it they will never experience it. Once you have shown that love, they are able to see it”.

Ironically, Tanya framed her relations with her South African workmates in such a way that she opened up to them and showed them love while at the same time making sure she was not ‘unequally yoked’ with them. The biblical instruction that Christians should not be unequally bound together with unbelievers comes from 2 Corinthians 6:14:

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers [do not make mismatched alliances with them or come under a different yoke with them, inconsistent with your faith]. For what partnership have right living *and* right standing with God with iniquity *and* lawlessness? Or how can light have fellowship with darkness? (Anon 2000).

The statement is usually applied to mean that business, marriage, and friendship with ‘the world’ should be avoided. The belief is that when such relations occur, Christians often compromise their beliefs by giving in to the demands of the other partner.

In this regard, Tanya talked about the need to limit association with ‘the world’ since they had the potential to ‘corrupt’ good character. She believed that it was possible for people of ‘the world’ to have other petty stories to share with her, but after they had done so she would then lead them to the scriptures. She gave the example of one woman who told her that she wanted to go to her rural home and “renew her isiXhosa culture of piercing the body and the likes”. Tanya advised her that she was a child of God and did not need to participate in those traditions. “She got born again and she spoke in tongues but she still thought of going to her village to participate in traditional rituals”, she added. At play here in Tanya’s relations with some of her workmates was the triad of love, conversion and Pentecostal discourses and “rituals of disjunction” (Robbins 2003, p.224). For Pentecostals, funeral rites, possession rituals, first-fruits and rain-making ceremonies and beer parties are believed to be wasteful and demonic (Maxwell 1998). A subscription to traditional culture is constructed as ‘the work of the devil’ and opposed to Christian practices as expected by God (Biri 2012; van Dijk 1998).

The notion of completely disposing of evil charms and powers used by a person before he or she became a ‘born again’ is strongly emphasised by FIFMI. Evidence of this is found in the many miracles performed by Guti aimed at delivering people from evil spirits brought on by tradition. In one of the miracles, Clara Moyo of Bulawayo was taken by mermaids when she was just six years old and stayed under the water for seven days. When she came out she had different pieces of clothes depicting the clothes she was expected to put on by the mermaids. She had become a witchdoctor who had knowledge of many different types of charms and herbs to heal people. However, the spirit of

witchcraft also made her sick most of the time. When she decided to give her life to Jesus she was completely delivered from evil spirits. She was instructed by Guti to “burn all the charms and ancestral clothes she used as a witchdoctor” (Guti 2011, p.78). This made her a “dedicated born again believer who loves Jesus with all her heart” (Guti 2011, p.78).

Doing away with tradition was also seen as the first step to ending poverty. Ezekiel Guti (2011) believes that any country which practices idolatry and witchcraft will become poor and have many problems. As he notes, people who believe in spirits are full of jealousy. They believe that spirits will give them material things or money. Many of the Shona people believe that while ancestors protect the living, they also cause trouble when they are not shown respect. They can carry the social fissures they had in their own lives over into the lives of descendants. Despite this view, breaking with ancestors “is always as much of a project as a pronouncement” (Engelke 2010, p.189). It is a process and not an event. In this regard, when Tanya advised her workmates against going back to tradition, she was also helping them end their poverty.

FIFMI congregants also used love as a tool to ‘free’ both church members and prospective converts from the traditional rituals and different forms of ‘bad’ behaviour they practiced (see van Dijk 1992b; Piot 2010). Even when love was not practiced for converts to break with traditional rituals, it was a show of what a believer’s behaviour should be like, as all the congregants alluded to. This was believed to be important for attracting potential converts to church. Love had the power to ‘deliver’ people from sinful practices in fairly the same way as the healing powers of certain pastors could deliver converts from evil spirits (see below).

What I demonstrate here is that there are possibilities and limits to love. Love is reaching out to the world, converting people; but there is a limit to that love when it comes to more intimate relationships. You do not want to be yoked with those not born again. It was therefore important to know the spectrum of intimacy that was allowed. Congregants could show lots of generosity to strangers, but once it came to a marriage partner there was a limit. While Pentecostal Charismatic Churches are very suspicious of other people because they are sources of ‘demonic infection’, ZAOGA/FIFMI members did not necessarily believe that. The Holy Spirit is a source of good, of healing, of speaking in

tongues, in-filling, and deliverance. The devil does not loom as large in the early forms of Pentecostalism; he is not everywhere. The older forms of Pentecostalism consisted of beliefs that once a person is cleansed by the Holy Spirit he became a strong person in God, someone who did not fear demons and other evil forces. A born again can love a nonbeliever because he/she does not have to fear contamination from interaction with the non-believer since he/she is the spiritually stronger person in that relationship. Thus, while the Bible says God's love is not limited, in practice believers drew their own boundaries regarding the degree to which they could love.

The issue of local 'culture' was often cited as one of the drawbacks with regards to converting South African citizens. One Sunday (March 1, 2015) after the service I had a conversation with Musa, a member of the Men of Integrity group for married men. Musa, who is a high school teacher, recalled his early experiences in South Africa in 2008 when, on one rainy day, he arrived in class drenched. Despite the fact that many students from this elite school had cars, they did not offer him transport, only to make fun of him when he finally arrived in class. Musa attributed this behavior to "the culture of this country" where "no one cares about anyone". Such a culture was contrasted to the supposedly 'Zimbabwean culture' which would not permit students to behave like that to their teachers. In Musa's view, the students worried more about their car seats getting wet than about him getting soaked. According to Musa, behaviour such as the one that was demonstrated by the student partly explained why South Africa had high crime rates and high divorce rates.

Similarly, I recall a conversation on a WhatsApp group (February 12, 2015) for the men's soccer team where similar sentiments about the 'South African culture' were echoed. One of the members asked a question, on behalf of a youth member who was not in the group, about whether the Bible sanctions Christians to tattoo their bodies. The majority of responses from the group members vehemently advised against tattooing the body. Arguments were backed with Biblical verses. In one of the responses, the discussant strongly reprimanded church youths for imitating what he believed to be 'South African cultures'. Rather than spend their time doing 'bling bling,' the youths were encouraged to join the church's soccer team where they would spend more time with fellow church mates

learning the 'right' morals. In this way, they would always remember that "they are in South Africa but they are not South African". Here we observe that changes in social and physical set-ups as a result of migration, and generational differences in tastes have significantly impacted on the degree to which the church can educate the youths about expected morals and other practices (see Bruhn 2005). While parents have limited time with their children due to other commitments, they expect the church to be the teacher of moral values (Bruhn 2005). Also, while sport can bring different people together, in this case it seemed to draw the church youths away from fellow South African youths. Here I should stress that the tournaments and league in which FIFMI's soccer team participated comprised strictly of teams from other different church organisations, some of which, however, had more South African citizens than migrants.

One-on-one evangelism

One of the ways that promoted contact with 'the world' was one-on-one evangelism, contact, as I present below, marked by potential converts both mocking and envying the conduct of people who were members of organised religious groups. One-on-one ministry entailed individual congregants chatting with prospective converts about the Bible and inviting them to cell groups (see below) and Sunday services. Most of the people who came and who contributed to church growth were brought by individual church members. Those church members met potential converts in different contexts. FIFMI encouraged its members to find at least one person to give witness about the word of God and to invite the potential congregant to church. This could be at their workplaces, at home or in any other public context where they found an opportunity. One-on-one ministry was preferred to other methods given the results it brought. For instance, Zakeo noted that "If you are twenty and everyone brings at least one convert you become forty. After a while the new members would become spiritually mature enough to minister to others". Another advantage was that in a one-on-one scenario church members did not talk about the Bible only, they also had a general conversation after which they invited the person to church. Alternatively, they could just invite someone when there was a social function at church, such as birthday celebrations and Christmas dinners. Once they came they would then be ministered to.

All congregants had to evangelise in their own ways. What was supposedly uniform about different congregants' approaches to Christian conversion was the love and exemplary behaviour they had to demonstrate both at home and at work. Regarding living an exemplary life, Baluleke says:

For example, the way we live here at our apartment complex, the more I get used to the people I live with here the more they get to know about my character and my church. You get closer to them and show them how an exemplary life should be lived. They may ask you to pray with them or you may call them and ask how things are. They may just like that and say, I think I want to go there.

The theme of living an exemplary life was emphasised by all the congregants. Members used the founder of the church as an example of what a morally upright life is like. The belief was that, on their own, good deeds are enough to evangelise. In this regard, one-on-one ministry, especially at the workplace, was potentially effective when the church member ministering was of respectable moral standing compared to his or her workmates. Zakeo used his own personal experience to remark that at the workplace people can observe that you are different from fellow workmates in the way you conduct yourself. As he related, many immoral things happen at the workplace. "Some workmates can slap each other's buttocks even when they are not in an intimate relationship. They may start caressing each other, something that you as a Christian may desist from doing", he said. Because of that, Zakeo noted, they (the workmates) may try and find out the secret behind your good character. In the process of finding out, you then interacted one on one.

Another thing noted by Zakeo was that some employees did not hesitate to pilfer from the company. They believed that as long as they were pilfering from the company they were justified because "*varungu vane mari yakawanda* [the employers have a lot of money]". So, they would try and convince others to join them in the act. But when you politely refused and told them that it is against your principles they also realised that you had your respectable moral principles. He went on to say that workmates will be observing those

principles. They may call you foolish and say *wakasarira* (you are backward) but deep down they know that when they encounter problems they will approach you to pray for them. Some of those people will be having their own churches where they attend and their conscience will be telling them that what they are doing (pilfering) is not right. The ambivalent attitude by fellow workmates towards that behaviour was demonstrated in that they mocked the ‘church person’, but they would still come to him for prayer when they were in trouble.

Similarly, other congregants narrated how the work environment presented an opportunity to cross social divides and to evangelise in many ways. For example, in his shuttle business, Bernard emphasised the importance of building good relations with every client he offered transport. Sometimes in the process of transporting his clients home he would get an opportunity to minister to them. He would tell them about the church and some of its activities. Bernard noted that maintaining good relations with his clients had two major advantages. One was the obvious advantage of helping to retain them and expand his pool of clients as they referred their workmates, friends and family to him for shuttle services. Another advantage was that by exhibiting a good character to clients who were not members of any Christian denomination, they might be attracted to Bernard’s church. Here we note the multiple ways in which Bernard saw his clients (see Werbner 2013). Not only were they clients, but they were also potential converts and friends.

Bernard saw the same good relations practiced at work as being critical at home and with fellow housemates and neighbours. He noted that the people he shared accommodation with were like a small family. Although Bernard lived alone in his room, most of the times he cooked together with his three flat mates. In his view, it was very awkward for him to spend the whole day without checking on his flat mates.

Zakeo echoed similar sentiments about the importance of having good relations with flat mates. For example, in a high-density suburb where he used to live before he came to Wynberg, his South African landlady, a single parent, “wondered why she never saw ladies coming to visit me”. Zakeo was sharing the flat with some Malawian men and they would invite different types of ladies to engage in sexual relationships with them. His

landlady resented that behaviour. So she would ask Zakeo, who was not married then, how he managed not to engage in sexual relationships.

Alongside efforts to demonstrate good relations to workmates and housemates was the stress on keeping physical distance from prospective converts. In the section on love and conversion above, I discussed Tanya's determination to love her workmates in order to attract them to church. At the same time, Tanya said that God instructed her not to go to Kayamandi, a township in Stellenbosch with a mixture of formal housing structures and informal houses. This is despite the fact that visiting prospective converts and fellowshiping with them arguably constituted some of the good relations to be demonstrated in the process of evangelism. Interestingly, Kayamandi is where many of Tanya's workmates lived.

Here we note that the issue of stereotyping and labeling was not one-directional. Both the congregants and 'the unbelievers', as respondents typically defined the South Africans, counter-labeled and counter-stereotyped one another. While the migrant congregants both self-excluded from *and* integrated themselves within the host community (Said 2001), the South African citizens also mocked and approached the migrant congregants for prayer when they encountered difficult circumstances. Some South Africans would inconsistently 'advise' their tenants to take a second girlfriend while at the same time appreciating them for being faithful to their partners. Focusing on how self and culture are represented by research participants during fieldwork, anthropologist Katherine Ewing (1990) argues that in everyday experience it is common for people to make rapid swings between contradictory and inconsistent self-representations. During their conversation, Shamim, Ewing's research participant, makes a series of inconsistent statements about Pakistani culture, specifically the proper behaviour of relatives. Shamim represents herself as "a scholar striving for a Ph.D. and 'progress,' a good wife, a good, obedient and grateful daughter, a good Muslim, a disobedient child, and, more subtly, a clever 'politician' . . ." (Ewing 1990, p.253).

I observed similar responses in my study, where exemplary life invited both mockery and envy and appreciation (see also Hansen et al. 2009). Such inconsistencies may not be

divorced from certain personal situations and experiences. Thus having experienced a series of heartbreaks in her intimate relationships, Zakeo's landlady, who is South African, commended the former for being faithful to his girlfriend who was in Zimbabwe. At the same time, the landlady unwittingly situated her comment within the general stereotype that South Africans were bedeviled by the 'demon' of sexual immorality (Biri 2014a). She did so by asking why Zakeo would not find a temporary substitute girlfriend to have sex with while he waited for her original girlfriend to come.

What made the above landlady's comments even more complex is that she resented the sexual immorality of her tenants from Malawi. One can infer from her background that it reminded her of her personal experiences with men who cheated on her. In the process of self-representation, this landlady gave 'advice' to Zakeo based on abstract generalisations and stereotypical perceptions that all men cheat. If I were to rephrase and summarise the landlady's shifts in orientation I would put it as follows: Because I have been cheated on several times, I resent men who cheat. Zakeo, I commend you for not cheating. However, I encourage you to cheat a little bit before you get married. At the same time, I resent my tenants from Malawi for cheating.

Data presented here also reveals the complexities regarding aspects of integration and exclusion and 'human togetherness' in an era of 'liquid modernity' (Bauman 2013), a concept Bauman used to emphasise how change is occurring more and more rapidly in the 'modern' world. Tanya's case of showing exemplary behaviour to workmates while at the same time being instructed by God not to visit them in Kayamandi is one example of these complexities and ambivalences. Such "co-existing and intersecting ambivalences defy clear-cut taxonomies of localities, communities (or even individuals) as either cohesive/integrated or not" (Karner & Parker 2011, p.366). While at work Tanya and her workmates have 'integrated', rigid social and religious boundaries continue to be retained at home. Such contradictions do not yield themselves to one-dimensional descriptions of everyday social realities. They point to the contradictory discourses of belonging and the many boundaries mediated by people in their everyday lives (Baumann 1996; F. Nyamnjoh 2012).

Cell groups and social relations

One of the structures that were highly valued by the church and represented the doctrinal closure and openness between church members and outsiders is the cell group, also known as home cells, home groups or small church groups. To come up with cell groups, the entire membership of the church is sub-divided into small groups, usually based on the physical location of the congregants. They are normally started by a single family and grow as more members come to stay in that neighbourhood or as more people are converted within a particular location. The numbers of people in each cell group are not uniform across all the groups; they vary from two members to about thirty members. Cell groups are conducted at one of the cell group members' houses every Wednesday or Thursday at 6 PM. FIFMI, Salt River assembly alone has thirty cell groups in low and medium density neighbourhoods. What contributed to this spread of the home cells across Cape Town is that some congregants left FIFMI assemblies in their neighbourhoods to attend the Salt River assembly.

In my effort to understand how cell groups contribute to church growth, I learnt from cell group leaders and other members that they have three main functions. These are numerical growth of the church, spiritual growth and social interaction between the congregants and past relations. Regarding these functions, Baluleke, who is also a cell group leader, provided the following summary, albeit with a focus on church members only:

It is at cell group level that many things happen that you cannot witness in church. Church is limited because you get there and what is only done is prayer and Bible study. You can even tell what is next. But then the cell group was put as a platform not only for growth but also growth that brings several dimensions of everyday relations. There is spiritual growth and then numerical growth in terms of bringing in lost souls. Then there is also the interaction that enriches the people themselves. In all these dimensions you are able to help each other at different levels.

The openness of cell groups was demonstrated in that neighbours, friends and workmates were invited by individual members to attend the Bible lessons and other social activities that took place at cell group level. Once the people accepted the invitation they sometimes ended up coming to church. “Then we start socialising with them out here (outside the church environment)”, said Baluleke. This was important for the building of a basic relationship that could be used to invite those people to church. It also helped in ‘planting roots’ in potential converts. Bernard recalled that when he used to stay with Pastor Divine, church members and outsiders would come, say eight of them, and they would then engage in a general, friendly conversation. Mikel Neumann (1999, p.166) confirms these functions of cell groups in his own research. He found that cell groups churches “do not divide the ministry into the lost and the saved with special home groups for each”. Rather, cell groups comprise of “a mix of non-Christians, new Christians, and more mature Christians. People come to know Christ in the home group with their friends or family who are already Christians, and in the same group they grow in maturity”.

Prospective converts also got to know more about the church, that “church is not only about money but also about preaching and other social activities”, as Zakeo noted. Ironically, it is at the cell group level that some of the finances used to ‘give to God’ in the church were raised. Ideally, the bulk of the finances that were used for the day-to-day running of the church were supposed to come from the cell groups. But because not all church members were consistent in attending cell group gatherings, the church ended up collecting finances at both the cell group level and during Sunday services. In this regard, cell groups, by inevitably discussing issues of money, were potentially discouraging prospective converts from coming to church. Money connected congregants to the spiritual realm of God while also disconnecting prospective converts from the congregants and maintaining their ‘unconnectedness’ to God. Here I use the term unconnectedness to mean that, unlike disconnectedness which implies a prior connection, the former defines the absence of a relationship.

However, individual congregants preferred inviting prospective converts to cell groups before they took them to church so that they would familiarise themselves with the people before they could attend the long services typical of FIFMI. Here we note that the agency

of individual congregants in relating with prospective converts is critical (see Ramey 2007). In the absence of an institutional church blueprint regarding association with 'the world', the congregants' agency was important in determining the extent to which church members interweaved their religious beliefs and evangelical mission into the everyday social relations with prospective converts. As Ingrid (2014) notes, while religious institutions and social relations are mutually constitutive, the agency of individual congregants in mapping everyday social relations is equally important.

What also made cell groups attractive to prospective converts were the festivities that were organised at cell group level. Barbecues, birthday parties, sports days, and end of year parties were sometimes organised at cell group level and were open to people from outside the church. I asked Baluleke if there were other activities that could attract people to cell groups besides studying the Bible. Below is his comprehensive response:

The main activities of cell groups are prayer and the study of the word of God. However, whenever you have a birthday and we say we are celebrating someone's birthday, that someone has his or her own connections beyond the church. Those connections will be asked to come. Sometimes the birthday party will be a surprise. So your friends will be invited and you do not even know that they have been invited. In addition, by inviting them sometimes it's intentional, knowing that once we invite them we have made a connection with them. Such ways can give outsiders an insight into the good things that are happening within this church and they end up coming.

Cell groups also occasionally gathered to celebrate their successes as migrants and to appreciate God's protection, share experiences, reflect on their performances both as cell groups and as the church at large. Milestones achieved in the course of the year were reflected upon. This included taking an audit of how as cell groups they contributed financially to the church, where improvement was necessary and how it could be

achieved⁷. What is worth emphasizing here is the jovial atmosphere in which the activities would be conducted outside the formal environment of the church. Zakeo recalled that the last time they had a braai some people were observing the proceedings from a distance. After a while they decided to join in the merry-making. After the barbecue session those people were then invited to church. The value of social outreach should not be underestimated. For instance, in his research, Comiskey (1998) learnt that cells that have six or more social meetings per month multiply twice as much as those who have only one, or none.

For established cell group members, inviting prospective converts was a critical initiative which presented dilemmas in the definition of both social and religious relations between the two parties. Joel Robbins and his colleagues (2014) have used the cases of evangelical conversion in Amazonia and Melanesia to articulate how conversion to Christianity reconfigures notions of relatedness, that is, how the self is related to others. They highlight that once a person has been converted, relatedness “come[s] to be based much more importantly, or at least ideally, on shared understandings of what is in the heart, rather than on shared bodily connection based either on exchange, shared kinship substance, or bodily transformation between perspectival positions” (Robbins et al. 2014, p.586). It is this reconfiguration of relations that has often informed efforts by Pentecostal Christians, for example, to minimise any form of association with kin (Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001; Laurent 2001). Here I have presented not relatedness after complete conversion but during the “process of becoming” (Engelke 2004, p.104) a complete convert, or the period of negotiating relatedness. I suggest that relations at the stage of transition are cautiously flexible in their accommodation of ‘the world’. At this stage, while prospective converts cannot be identified with the church, but by coming to cell group events, they would have taken the first step towards conversion. However, even after attending cell group social activities, they may choose not to convert. In this regard, cell group members had to strike a balance between treating these potential converts as both outsiders and prospective insiders.

⁷ Such audits are necessary given that cell groups and individuals that perform well in terms of their financial contribution were announced and acknowledged during selected Sunday services.

One of the ironies about reaching out to ‘the world’ through cell group-based evangelism and social activities was the belief that prospective converts were lost to the enemy’s (the devil’s) camp. The mission of cell groups, therefore, was to redeem the former back into the Christians’ camp (Comiskey 1998). The metaphors of ‘the lost’ and ‘the enemy’ recurred even in church preaching in which congregants were reminded that their duty was to fulfil Jesus’ Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20) of going into ‘the world’ and converting people to Christianity. As Comiskey (1998) points out, churches “advance into the enemy’s camp of non-Christians and even track their progress”. In this regard, cell groups “function like nets that spread out over entire cities. Buses haul the catch to the celebration service for worship”. So lost are the people in the world that cell groups must “run a rescue shop within a yard of hell”. (Kreider 2013, p.4). Kreider uses the analogy of those who go to war to show that the main function of the cell group must be to win the war against the world analogous to the way wars are fought to conquer the enemy. This means that the fellowship and relationships that develop in cell groups should be regarded as ‘fringe benefits’, with the main benefit being “to reach the lost and discipline new believers” (Kreider 2013, p.4).

Pastors who connect to disconnect social relations

Alongside invitations of outsiders to socialise and to listen to sermons, pastors also valorised their own Biblical doctrines and cultural mores. They usually expected local social groups to adjust, if not completely leave, their supposedly immoral ways of living as a condition for acceptance in the social and religious life of migrants, what I call conditional fellowship. Local social groups had to be socialised into understanding what God expects of them: how to choose dignified friends, how wives and husbands should relate in a manner acceptable in God’s kingdom, how to abstain from premarital sexual intercourse, and how to date in the ‘right’ way that leads to marriage and not engage in adulterous relationships that result in premarital pregnancies. In trying to inculcate all these social and religious values in local communities, the pastors were positioning themselves, to use Hansen et al’s (2009) concept, as sources of cultural authority. This invoked questions about migrants’ claims to moral supremacy over local communities that scholars such as Biri (2014a) observed in much of the teachings by Pentecostal pastors

when they preached to their congregants who had crossed the geographical boundaries of Zimbabwe.

The charisma, spiritual or healing power, authority and conviviality of a presiding pastor at any time were some of the qualities which were indispensable to the growth of FIFMI. At the same time, and as I demonstrate below, the same qualities contributed to church members' social disconnection from non-church relations. Being gifted with all the above qualities, it was during Pastor Divine's time that the church witnessed a remarkable numerical growth. I learnt that in addition to his exceptional teachings, Pastor Divine also attracted a large following due to his healing and deliverance powers. For instance, Zakeo recalled one Sunday service when he was praying for congregants who had had surgical operations and the marks where they had been operated on disappeared. He said that on that day people who had been operated on were invited by Pastor Divine to confirm their healing. Zakeo recalled seeing people being prayed for and crying for joy after they were healed. His friend even responded to the invitation to healing just to witness if the claims were genuine. Zakeo's friend is the one who came back and told him that he was astonished by how traces of surgical operation had disappeared. This attracted a lot of people to church.

While healing and deliverance can be conceived of purely from a religious perspective, Laurent (2001) invites us to also see these acts as ways used by pastors to readjust converts' relations with others outside the church. As new and old converts are delivered from physical ailments they are also delivered from poverty, friends, neighbours and family members that do not subscribe to Christian principles. Meyer (1999) demonstrates this in her study of the Ewe of Ghana. Similarly, as local South Africans were healed and converted, they were also delivered from their social relations and boundaries into the new 'family' and 'community' of believers. In other words, as existing social boundaries and bonds were being transformed, new social relations were being created.

At the same time, since kin and 'evil spirits' "prove difficult to break with finality" (Robbins 2003, p.225), the processes of deliverance and social disconnection should not be understood as once-off events. In this regard, breaking with the past through deliverance,

as Meyer (1999) and Robbins (2003) also argue, is a long-term project. Also, since deliverance attracted people to FIFMI, it should not be understood only in terms of disconnection, but also in its power to connect. I presented earlier in this Chapter that Pastor Divine would invite both church-mates and outsiders to his house to play tennis and share scriptures and some people would end up joining the church. However, once converted and delivered, members had to make the effort to disconnect from their previous relations. I would argue, therefore, that pastors, and, to some extent, ordinary church members, connected with ‘the world’ in order to disconnect, and both processes were long-term. This resonates with Simmel’s view (cited in Frisby & Featherstone 1997) that the human condition should be understood with regard to its predisposition to both transcend and erect social boundaries.

Retaining South Africans: the challenges

Although FIFMI was witnessing a remarkable numerical growth, it still had few South African congregants. Most of its members are Zimbabwean migrants. Due to the nature of my study, I always made an effort to chat with some members every Sunday after the service. What I observed was that most conversations between congregants took place in Shona, with very isolated cases when members chatted in English or one of the local South African languages. To me this was an indication that the church had very few locals and migrants from countries other than Zimbabwe. There are studies about churches in South Africa that have become ethnically and nationally diverse, creating a convivial atmosphere for their members, both locals and migrants (Hay 2014). Research on migrant religious organisations also indicates that although local populations may resent migrants for competing with them for material resources, they (locals) imagine migrant preachers as being endowed with more spiritual power and authority (Hansen et al. 2009). Consider, for example, the following statement by Thomas Hansen and his colleagues concerning why locals are attracted to migrant preachers:

... while the ordinary migrant is surrounded by suspicion and apprehension, the travelling preacher, pastor and religious specialist is often seen as the bearer of extraordinary wisdom, power and insight qua his non-local origin.

Many societies attribute extraordinary charisma to powerful strangers (see Sahlins 1985). The widespread perception of South Africa as a somewhat deracinated and damaged society in need of salvation and cultural cleansing by people rooted in purer and more authentic cultures, make the foreign preacher particularly compelling. While the mobility of the migrant in general makes her/him a liability, or a potential threat, the peregrinations of the preacher are the very source of her/his authority (Hansen et al. 2009, p.192).

For me, what Hansen and colleagues observe signifies the potential for more ethnic and racial intermingling, if not in social, political and economic activities then in religion-based activities. Although there were still few South African nationals who attend FIFMI, church leaders employed many strategies to retain, as well as appeal to, potential converts. The strategies included giving South African nationals influential positions in various church ministries, inviting potential converts to cell groups and engaging in festivities together, taking the church to the people by opening several branches, and, in certain instances adapting to local situations with regard to songs and general moral expectations. Through these strategies, a few South African, Malawian and Batswana nationals were converted.

With regard to giving South African nationals influential positions in church, Bernard talked about Unathi, choir member who was committed to singing in church but had a number of challenges to address. Her work schedule required her to sometimes work on Sundays. So, most of the times she would not attend choir practice sessions and she also would not come to church even when she was not going to work. In spite of this, she had a passion for music. So the music ministry appointed her as the leader of the youths. The idea was that the responsibilities entrusted upon her would motivate her to come to church and to also encourage her South African friends to come with her. In Bernard's view, "even in high school some students would be made prefects just because they were naughty. But the fact that you have given them responsibility would make them behave well, and they also know how other naughty and truant students behave".

The metaphor of truant students shows that sometimes locals were given positions of authority as a way to work with them to invite more fellow locals, encourage them to continue coming, and to make them feel that they own the church. At the same time it has overtones of labeling; it seems to suggest that the local church members were of questionable Christian values. As I later discovered, Unathi had fallen pregnant out of wedlock, a condition that is treated with contempt in FIFMI.

To be called *mvana* (an unwed mother), Bernard observed, is not a ‘sweet’ statement but instead has overtones of mockery⁸. Yet, in South Africa people accepted it and did not have a problem with it, he added. He said that in Zimbabwe if a choir member got pregnant outside marriage she immediately would be asked to stop participating in the activities of the choir and her gift of singing would be destroyed. But if that person came to South Africa she could come to church. She could continue to actively participate in church functions. Migration has been blamed by FIFMI leaders for the widespread breakdown of marriages (Biri 2014a). ZAOGA, through its teachings, strongly castigates divorce, and this is in keeping with Shona patriarchal belief that women should always strive to make their marriages work despite the hardships they face. Women, Eunor Guti argues, should treat their husbands as their shoe – which may not always fit perfectly but is still worn – and lord over their lives (Guti 1992). Eunor teaches ZAOGA/FIFMI women not to refuse their husbands sex, since it is tantamount to insubordination (Guti 2006). Those women whose husbands indulge in extra-marital affairs should pray for their husbands to change their immoral behaviour.

While local groups were still few in FIFMI, the church was making effort to move away from the notion of the ‘migrant church’ that was insulated from South African nationals. The very notion of migrant church was being questioned. For Bernard, one of the important strategies of the church was “*munhu haafaniri kutsvaga* church (a person should not look for a church). Church *ngaitsvage munhu* (the church must look for a person)”. Bernard noted that sometimes when we are in a foreign land we fail to achieve

⁸ Here it is important to note the categories of church membership that are officially recognised in FIFMI; children’s ministry, young generation, youths, single ladies, men of substance, women of substance. The church does not have a classification for those who fall pregnant outside marriage.

that strategy due to a shortage of resources. “But if you go to Zim, generally everywhere there is a FIFMI, almost everywhere. Why, because of that strategy”, he observed. This, coupled with attempts to engage in recreational activities with social groups outside the church, was an indication of the interweaving of social boundaries in complex and ambivalent ways. Karner and Parker (2011) challenge rigid taxonomies implied by ‘community cohesion discourses that ignore the simultaneous existence of conflict and conviviality in the context of migration-driven ethnic pluralism. Although the strategy was for the church to become a South African church, those who had started attending services were defined as ‘our own.’ Ironically, this made it a Zimbabwean church again. In other words, the church is for locals but it is for Zimbabweans.

What we also see is that while the church made an effort to accept South African nationals as church members even though they had children out of wedlock, such members were still constructed as a ‘challenge.’ They upset the conventional church structures, making it difficult to classify the different groups of people represented in church. The same South Africans that the church was working hard to convert were simultaneously accepted and labeled and stereotyped, an attitude that had the potential to discourage some congregants from evangelising. Biri (2014a) notes that ethnic prejudice by some transnational Pentecostal movements means that they devalue the morality of the South Africans while celebrating their own moral supremacy. According to Biri, claims to moral supremacy are highlighted through Pentecostal leadership’s discouragement of inter-marriages between Zimbabwean migrants and other ethnic groups. Inter-marriages are castigated on the basis that they pollute the morality of the Zimbabweans.

At the same time, while there seem to be clear patterns of labelling that seem to question whether the social boundaries between being South African and Zimbabwean are so ambivalent, Zimbabwean migrant congregants also adjusted and adapted to some South African cultures. For example, I discovered that second generation Zimbabwean migrant congregants in FIFMI were finding it difficult to maintain the tastes expected of them by their first generation migrant parents. This was especially so in music and other forms of entertainment, a situation which is influencing the church to retool and rebrand the songs played during formal services to reflect ‘modern’ trends in South African music. As Birgit

Meyer (2012, p.160) observes, “Whereas, up until now PCCs have mainly referred to local cultural and religious traditions through diabolization or demonization, signs indicate a more positive appreciation of these traditions in charismatic circles”.

With regard to girls who fell pregnant out of wedlock, the church was also making an effort to welcome them and encourage them to be a part of the church. Researchers such as Pasura (2013) see the labeling of the South African citizens and their countries by Zimbabwean-based churches as attempts to legitimise their expansion and appeal to Zimbabwean migrants. In Europe and America, for instance, the stereotyping of many countries as ‘godless’, sexually immoral, and as according little regard to the family institution (evidenced by high rates of divorce) justify reverse evangelisation projects (Catto 2008). Here reverse evangelisation means taking the message about Christianity to the countries where Christianity is or used to be predominantly practiced.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented and discussed various ways in which FIFMI, Salt River Assembly, has grown and expanded through multiple and seemingly contradictory ways of engaging with diverse social actors. I argued that in the process of ministering to people, congregants sometimes simultaneously opened and closed social boundaries in ambivalent, inconsistent and spontaneous ways. This happened during the process of interacting with and accommodating prospective converts. Although the established FIFMI members simply labelled ‘local’ South Africans as ‘non-Christians’, this is not to imply that ones I am discussing are all non-Christians. Also, as people of ‘the world’ shared social spaces and everyday experiences with church members, they, however inadvertently, both challenged and accepted the congregants’ religious values as and when it suited them. This process was not one-directional and smooth, it involved messy (F. Nyamnjoh 2012) but mutual stereotyping, mutual labeling and mutual adaptation to unfamiliar customs and values by both the congregants and prospective converts. The process also brought into play the agency of both the individual congregants and the prospective converts as it was informed by the situation at hand. Even when social outreaches and evangelism were collective, as in the case of cell groups, individual

congregants still had a significant role in initiating invitations to 'unbelievers' and ensuring that they continued to come to church. In the process of converting people, temporary, semi-permanent and permanent friendships and acquaintanceships were created. FIFMI was presented as a 'family', a 'community' where congregants visited each other, played games together, and invited 'outsiders' (and therefore, those who are not a part of the 'community'). The approaches to conversion – one-on-one evangelism, cell groups, and presiding pastors' spiritual power and hospitality – facilitated social relations in different contexts and challenged the binaries of inclusion vs exclusion, sameness vs difference. Preaching to 'the world' was not necessarily about waiting for them to come to church or moving around with a Bible in hand telling people nothing else but biblical content. Rather, it happened through a diversity of social activities, some of which seemed unrelated to the mission of evangelism.

CHAPTER FIVE: COINCIDENTAL ENCOUNTERS BEYOND CHURCH-BASED SOCIAL SPACES

Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the spontaneous and situation-based contexts when individual FIFMI Church members carved out social relations with social actors who were not members of the church. I situate these contingent or chance encounters within the context of everyday practices that often depart from religious ideological expectations of maintaining certain boundaries in social relations. The data I present here points to the ambivalences of factors such as religious ideologies (or their interpretation by individual congregants), social class, and, ethnicity vis-à-vis social boundaries and social relations. I suggest that the importance attached to these factors varies from one social encounter to another and from congregant to congregant. In Chapter Four I discussed how ideologies of the church were subjectively interpreted during the process of evangelism. I build on this previous discussion by exploring the ways in which church members responded to chance encounters.

My understanding of situational encounters benefits from Max Gluckman's (1958) analysis of how social situations sometimes bring diverse religious, ethnic and racial groups together and render certain identities and relations complex. As a member of the Manchester School of Social Anthropology, Max Gluckman believed that situational analysis was one of the basic principles of understanding social relations. In this regard, while religious identities and ideologies may inform who to socialise with and the social boundaries to be created from these social relations, certain social situations evoke the performance and salience of social identities that have little to do with religion. As Pnina Werbner points out, situational analysis "theorizes the fact that people bear multiple identities and that determining which identity is performed, stressed or highlighted depends on, indeed is often determined by, the social situation" (2015, p.37). As I discuss in this chapter, social situations are intricate, they do not always follow a straightforward pattern. As such, when individual migrant congregants who attended FIFMI met other people outside the church, in airplanes, and at the apartment complexes where they lived,

they either conformed to, redefined or defied certain social boundaries as the situation dictated.

Understanding social situations

As 2015 was about to end, Mary could not wait to go to Zimbabwe after spending three consecutive years in South Africa. She had even started packing and imagining reconnecting with her parents and childhood friends in Gweru, a city in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. Also, as per family custom, she was expected to introduce her two-year old son to the people back home, something Mary ideally should have done when the baby was a few months old. However, having gone through a challenging second half of 2015, Mary was very broke financially. Desperate as she was, she could not borrow; the founder of the church encouraged believers to live within their means and to save money (Guti 2011). This principle was considered to be one of the key foundations to the growth and expansion of the church.

So, as late as mid-December, Mary had no idea how she would go home. Then came a call she least expected. It was the best news she could ever have hoped for at that time. "Congrats! You have won R5,000 courtesy of Huggies nappy pants." She could not believe what she had heard. Mary remembered buying pampers from Checkers in September when she learnt about the competition. Although she had filled out and submitted the competition form, she knew that her chances of winning were between slim and nothing. How on earth would she be selected as one of only fifteen winners in the entire South Africa! However, her joy was cut short when she remembered that in order to claim the prize money she had to produce the till slip she was given when she bought the pampers. Mary had kept the receipt for a few months following her transaction only for it to disappear in her apartment. But because "the devil is a liar who steals the blessings of the children of God", as Mary put it, she was not ready to give up. So she phoned the production manager of the marketing company that was running the competition on behalf of Huggies. Again, she was surprised when the manager said to her: "Don't worry about the till slip. I will text you the reference number which you can use to get a duplicate of the slip at the Checkers shop where you purchased the pampers."

Although the money was only deposited early January when her vacation was coming to an end, Mary still managed to rush to Zimbabwe and spend a few days.

While it is not necessarily a ‘miracle’ to win a competition, the timing of the win was what mattered the most for Mary. She believed that although she had prepared herself to win the competition by applying for it, the win was still both unexpected and timely. In her view, God was waiting for her to exhaust her options regarding where to find money before He could intervene in her situation. This demonstrated God's supreme powers and capacity relative to that of ordinary humans. It is these unexpected encounters that I focus on in this chapter.

Guti had similar experiences in Bindura when he left his carpentry job to concentrate on full-time ministry (Guti 2011, p.33). For instance, he narrated that at one point he was left with one pair of trousers and a jacket, but he could not see how dire his predicament was because of great miracles he witnessed and the many people being saved. He narrated that three women were raised by God to provide him with food “at the right time” during his time of desperation and hunger (Guti 2011). According to Gutu, these women never made prior arrangements and were not from one area, but God spoke to them differently. One would give him breakfast, another lunch, and the other supper (Guti 2011). This, in Gutu's view, was similar to the biblical story of Elijah when he was in the wilderness and “The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening” (1 Kings 17:6).

The mere fact of these experiences may not seem to be self-evidently of a miraculous nature. However, church beliefs made people receptive to unexpected encounters or expectant of happenstances. There is a belief that God sends angels in the form of physical human beings to assist Christians when they are in need (the case of Brian on the flight presented below). It is believed that the Holy Spirit operates in unpredictable ways in the lives of the believers. This is based on the belief that Jesus can be anywhere. So if one is on a plane, Jesus could be sitting next to you. Older forms of Christianity, before the rise of Pentecostalism, disseminated beliefs that Jesus could be any person. He could come back to earth as any person. So, when you meet a stranger on the road, you have to be friendly to them because it might be Jesus visiting your house.

FIFMI members' testimonies often brought out the idea that when you fell on hard times you could unexpectedly receive assistance from a person you last spoke to many year ago. One day Godwin, a man in his mid-20s, was giving a testimony about how he found R100 just lying on the floor of the train he had boarded. That day, Godwin was so broke that he did not know what he would eat. What convinced him that this money was sent to him from God was the fact that of all the passengers on the train, he was the first to see the money. It was not a coincidence that this happened when he was in such a desperate need of money.

A believer had to work for spontaneous encounters through various acts. Thus, pastors also encouraged members to be faithful in tithing and offerings, but also in just giving others in general. This was one of the qualities that the founder strongly emphasised as a way to get out of poverty. Giving was defined as a spirit, just as poverty was also seen as a spirit which had to be delivered from the lives of believers. Money is a seed that, if benevolently given to others, would germinate and give birth to more money. Happenstances had an element of a system in that they always came because a believer had invested in it long before they experienced a problem. Investment could be in the form of being honest in doing acts of kindness to other believers, being a committed worker in one or many church ministries (investing in serving God), and paying tithe and giving offerings. God was constructed as a 'good clerk' who hardly forgot the gifts people offered him (Maxwell 1998). When members, especially committed Christians, were faced with a problem, God remembered their investments and came to their assistance in unexpected ways. For this reason, even a journey could be structured in unexpected ways. Thus, Kuda, who had served for many years in church as an usher, narrated a miraculous trip he had when he was invited for a job interview in a city he had never been to before.

The unexpectedness of his experience was less in the invitation than in the manner of the journey itself. Although he had applied for the job a couple of months before, he was only called for an interview the morning of the day before the interview. He had to travel a journey of about 400 kilometres from Johannesburg to Bloemfontein, and arrived for the interview before 9:00 am. In order to have adequate time for the journey, Kuda had

decided to sleep over at a friend's house in Kroonstad, which is almost halfway to Bloemfontein from Johannesburg. Since it was his first visit to Bloemfontein, Kuda printed a google map that he could use to get him to the company once he had arrived with the public transport he was using. Although he encountered no problems during the first half of the journey, thanks to his host in Kroonstad, the remaining part was full of uncertainties. Kuda had no idea where he would disembark and whether he would need additional transport from wherever he would be dropped off to get to the final destination. Little did he know that "in the same car I was in, there was a Good Samaritan who had been sent by God to help me," he recalled. He and the "Good Samaritan" had boarded the car together from Kroonstad and they were going to the same city.

Kuda had disclosed to him his plight just a few kilometres before arriving in Port Elizabeth. In a style that appeared to replay the Bible story about the Good Samaritan, the stranger was compassionate towards Kuda's plight. It happened that the stranger's destination was a stone throw from where he would be disembarking. So, the man proposed that they get off together and use his company car to get Kuda to his final destination. Although Kuda accepted the offer, he was nervous about the man's benevolence. He was aware that people have been killed in order to sell their body parts to traditional doctors. At the same time, Kuda tried to convince himself that this was how God had intervened in his situation. "How on earth would someone just volunteer to do all this for a person he did not know?", Kuda rhetorically asked me. His story had a happy ending, as the stranger drove him to the venue of the interview at no cost. Reflecting on this journey, Kuda attributed this encounter with the Good Samaritan to his dedicated service in church. For Him, this experience was just a small token from God to show how much He was willing to provide for those who committed their time to working for Him.

To note in the three stories I present below is the diversity of the contexts of, and responses to, the situational encounters by individual congregants in each story. The stories are not products of systematic questions regarding how social situations lead to complex and ambivalent social boundaries. Rather, as I present below, they emerge spontaneously from conversations about certain general topics: the link between cell groups and church growth (Balulekes' story, see Chapter Three), the experiences of

coming to South Africa for the first time (Brian's story) and challenges of making friends in South Africa (Tanya's story). However, by chance, as the discussions unfolded they revealed interesting experiences that point to particular momentary encounters that connect with other everyday experiences of belonging and social boundary-making and unmaking (see F. Nyamnjoh 2012).

Brian: Contradictions and misconceptions high in the sky

Like the other experiences I present in this chapter, Brian's meeting with Mama Nogwebu started off as what seemed like a one-off encounter, but developed into ongoing interactions. Brian's initial encounter with Mama Nogwebu in the airplane was full of contradictions and ambiguities in thought and action. It was predicated upon a series of ambivalences, at least as far as Brian's conception of social class, religion, and culture were concerned. This later influenced Brian's noncommittal conversation with Mama Nogwebu.

Brian recalled an adventure in August 2011 when he was coming from Zimbabwe to attend an academic conference in Cape Town. He arrived late at the Oliver Tambo International Airport (Johannesburg) and missed his afternoon connecting flight to Cape Town and had to settle for a late flight. It was his first time to fly. Brian had no knowledge of what to expect even in terms of the simple things like sitting arrangements, how to fasten the seat belt, and where to put hand luggage. I asked Brian if he managed to seek advice from flight attendants or any other passengers during the flight, to which he replied: "I wanted to, but then you know since I was flying I did not want to expose my ignorance and backwardness by seeking assistance from predominantly white passengers who dominated the flight. I just pretended to be experienced. So I tried as much as I could to follow what other passengers were doing. I found the seat I had been allocated and sat down," Brian recalled. He went on to say, "At the same time I was not surprised that there were very few black passengers in the flight. The truth is that this confirmed my views about airplanes; that they were for the affluent and that lower classes had no privilege to share air space with those who can afford to spoil themselves."

In the flight, Brian sat next to a black South African woman who, as he got to know the following day, was a Member of the South African Parliament. Against Brian's timid reluctance to chat with Mama Nogwebu, the South African woman, initiated a conversation. This proved to be important for Brian, as he managed to get assistance on even the simplest things, such as fastening the seat belt and knowing where to put hand luggage. All this kind assistance changed his perception of the 'upper class' people, especially the view that they are ivory towers who do not want to chat with 'lower class' people.

With regards to social class, and to some extent culture, Brian saw Mama Nogwebu as belonging to "a completely different world." While Brian comes from a 'lower class', Mama Nogwebu is a respectable Member of Parliament. The chasm between the two was enough to instill a sense of uncertainty in Brian regarding the response he was likely to get from her in the event that he initiated a conversation with her. The feeling of uncertainty also triggered stereotypes about Mama Nogwebu's class position. Brian believed that elites' behaviour towards people of the 'lower classes' was of such contempt that they were likely to ignore kind gestures of greeting if extended to them.

Brian's image of the socio-economic class of people who use air transport has been discussed by Nyamnjoh and Ingrid (2014) in their study of conviviality and negotiations with belonging in urban Africa. Paying attention to South Africa's urban public transport system, they note that it has remained premised on the legacy of "urban socio-spatial and racialized distancing instilled by apartheid geography. The post-national liberation period in South Africa has witnessed a continuing socio-economic marginalization of the majority of those previously excluded under apartheid" (Nyamnjoh & Ingrid 2014, p.219). With regards to economic class, Brian thought that he was the lowest ranked passenger who had found himself on the flight by 'God's grace', as he remarked. Considering himself to be of a lower class than all the passengers, Brian did not chat with his neighbour in the flight. Despite this, his neighbour initiated a conversation, leading to an interesting unfolding of events that point to Brian's ambivalences of thought and action and sustained social relations that defy religious and socio-economic lines.

Brian's reluctance to chat also emanated from not knowing what to talk about: should he discuss religion, or politics, or economics? "What if you start talking about Jesus and the bible, as Christians love to do, and they respond by saying 'As-Salaam-Alaikum', just to show you that they are Muslim!" However, the two managed to relate well, focusing on general topics and also topics of common interest and avoiding potentially sensitive issues. For instance, they talked about the conference Brian was coming to attend, and Mama Nogwebu's first visit to Zimbabwe a few years back. While Brian said that he deliberately avoided topics on religion, he was not sure if Mama Nogwebu's avoidance of the topic was done reflexively.

Since he needed accommodation for the night, his encounter with Mama Nogwebu would be crucial. When he missed the initial flight that he had been booked by the conference organisers he also lost contact with the shuttle that was supposed to pick him up at the airport. Again, Mama Nogwebu came to Brian's rescue. As he said, "Imagine a stranger coming to your assistance without even thinking twice! I felt ashamed of my initial timidity to talk to the woman. I became embarrassed to think that I had taken this long to tell mama Nogwebu about my plight."

Brian was also cautious of how sensitive some people might be to one's accent when communicating. The issue of language and its varieties also helps to understand the making and unmaking of social boundaries in this story. Language varieties between two socio-economic classes, even those from the same ethnic group, are more likely to be imagined as different. Notice here that Brian did not refer to different languages. Instead, he talked about accent, implying that it is probable that his neighbour in the flight may be speaking the same language as himself (there are many Zimbabweans in South Africa) albeit in a different and more polished accent. Siziba's (2014, p.173) study of language and identity negotiation by Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg has demonstrated that language varieties "constitute capital ('entry fees') in negotiating their [migrants'] constructions by others as outsiders". In this sense, it not enough to be able to speak the same language as certain classes of people; even more important is knowing how to speak it 'properly' because language is "evaluated and tested for authenticity" (Siziba 2014, p.174). As Bourdieu (1991) argues, variations in competence and expressive styles

also matter in determining identification with certain social groups. Equally, Brian perceived of class as indexical of social interactions and boundaries. It did not even cross his mind that Mama Nogwebu could take the initiative to speak to him, such that when she did it came as a surprise. In his view, language, as a marker of social class, produces an ivory tower that walls off the well-off from the impecunious.

At the same time, Brian's perception of the link between social class and social boundaries did not end there. During and after his conversation with Mama Nogwebu, he took stock of his misconceptions and arrives at the conclusion that "my imagination about airplane passengers was naïve." Even after the woman had initiated the conversation, Brian still lacked 'the guts' to quench his curiosity to know more about her by asking further questions. On the one hand, Brian imagined that people who board airplanes prefer not to talk to other passengers. On the other hand, reality as it unfolded during his journey drove him to think otherwise; a person cannot be changed by an airplane. While Brian believed that as a mode of transport, an airplane is only for the rich, he found himself in the airplane, "rubbing shoulders with the rich." Although he was walking with a South African woman who had taken the initiative to chat with him, he was still cautious about talking to South Africans because of "all these stories about robberies and murder." Ironically, this did not stop him from thinking that Mama Nogwebu could be a worse victim than himself, albeit a victim of his indecision. What we see is that Brian managed to deconstruct the same boundaries he had erected in his mind as he re-oriented his stereotypical perception of certain classes of people. While he had imagined Mama Nogwebu through a stereotypical lens, he had missed an opportunity to ask her for assistance. However, following Mama Nogwebu's assistance in demystifying the stereotype, Brian opened up and acknowledged his misconceptions. Equally, Simmel (1971) believes that boundaries hinder and enable, having the capacity to liberate but also to confine. They can be the basis for forging identities of sameness but they can also serve as the basis for building rigid binaries between self and other. Brian's reflections and subsequent actions cannot be reduced to simple 'either-or' positions.

The ambivalence of religion is demonstrated in that while Brian is Christian, and knows what Christians often do when they meet people whom they think are not Christians (they

evangelise), he chose to avoid topics to do with religion. In this regard, he managed to compromise his religious values and principles in relation to the yet-to-be-known values and principles of his potential interlocutor. Goffman (1959) has argued that in all organised social life, what can be made relevant to interaction in any particular social situation is prescribed. If there is an agreement between people regarding these prescriptions, notes Fredrik Barth (1998, p.16), “their agreement on codes and values need not extend beyond that which is relevant to the social situations in which they interact.” In other words, people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds can interact without necessarily crossing the line that provokes serious ethnic or religious feuds. Barth goes on to note the following regarding interaction:

Stable inter-ethnic relations presuppose such a structuring of interaction: a set of prescriptions governing situations of contact, and allowing for articulation in some sectors or domains of activity, and a set of proscriptions on social situations preventing inter-ethnic interaction in other sectors, and thus insulating parts of the cultures from confrontation and modification (Barth 1998, p.16).

We see these proscriptions in the case of Brian in that he meticulously examined the topics to be discussed before he engaged in a conversation with Mama Nogwebu, and topics on religion were no exception. This strategy of both engagement and avoidance has been observed by other researchers who focus on everyday interaction in contexts marked by social diversity. For instance, anthropologist Susanne Wessendorf’s (2014) study of conviviality in the London Borough of Hackney demonstrates that in public spaces, people avoid conflict by “being civil toward difference”. The women who were Wessendorf’s research participants came from diverse class, ethnic and national backgrounds and were particular about the issues they discussed when they were together. They avoided certain topics that were sensitive and tried to respect members’ religious views and other personal issues. They focused more on the issues they shared, such as gardening, children, and cooking.

I have presented above Glick Schiller and Caglar's (2015) belief that casual, fleeting sociable relations between diverse social actors are predicated upon "actors' mutual sense of being human." Here I argue that while the sense of being human exists in individuals, how it is practiced differs from person to person and from one social context to another. This, in my view, is what also contributes to the ambivalences of social relations in the context of migration and religious ideologies. Sometimes a sense of being human suffers in the hands of an inferiority complex, as Brian's initial reluctance to initiate a conversation with the South African woman in the airplane indicates. Although Brian was the one to benefit from initiating the conversation, he was cautious in his approach to the potential source of help and only did so as a last resort and after Mama Nogwebu had demystified Brian's belief that airplane passengers always mind their own business. In this context Brian battles with himself as to whether to initiate a conversation with the woman, gauges the possible reaction she will give him and decides to bury himself in an article. Inferiority complex plus misconceptions about the behaviour exhibited by people in certain socio-spatial contexts frames Brian's 'asocial' behaviour. As I present in Chapter Six, Brian is generally a sociable man whose convivial personality extends to social actors beyond his church. His misconception was not informed by ethnicity, or race, or nationality. Rather, I choose here to call it a 'liquid misconception', meaning some kind of misconception about human behavior that is often baseless, unfounded and not premised upon any precedence. Here I use insights from Zygmunt Bauman's (2006, p.2) notion of 'liquid fear', which he describes as "diffuse, scattered, unclear, unattached, unanchored, free floating fear" that has "no address" and supersedes rationality in influencing human action.

At home with 'awkward' Khaya: Entanglements of belonging

Brian's subsequent visits to Mama Nogwebu's place and acquaintance with her teenage son, Khaya, help to demonstrate the contradictions of belonging in everyday life. Nyamnjoh (2012, p.66) has argued for research on migration, exclusion and belonging that primarily considers the "perspectives and experiences of migrants themselves". He believes that:

Studies reflecting them [migrants] would require getting to know them as human beings, spending time with them in intimate circles, and developing research questions not of a slash and burn or rapid appraisal nature, but of an ethnographic type, with a focus on the complexities and contradictions of what it means to claim and deny belonging.

Of interest to me here is how belonging can be contradictory. Under what circumstances does one simultaneously belong and not belong? And what is the implication of this contradiction on understanding social relations between different groups?

As part of my attempt to address this, I present Brian's first impression of and subsequent relations with Khaya. When the economic situation in Zimbabwe started getting worse again after the government of national unity, Brian moved to South Africa in 2014. He reconnected with Mama Nogwebu, who later invited him to visit her in the northern suburb of Constantia where she was staying. Brian was living in Rondebosch, a southern suburb. He was married to Sylvia, although they did not yet have children. Despite Brian and Sylvia's close relations with Mama Nogwebu, their attempts to extend this intimacy to Khaya were not very successful. Khaya thought that 'strangers' always took advantage of his mother's kind heart and that it was his duty to protect her. Even Brian and Sylvia's strategy to draw closer to him through discussing soccer, a sport which both the former and Khaya are passionate about, did not produce the desired results. Brian presented his attempt to create convivial relations with Khaya in the following fashion:

After Mama had told me all this about Khaya, I realised I had something in common with him that I could use to chat: our love for soccer. I switched my attention to Khaya and started a conversation about soccer. That is when he told me a few stuff about himself being a Chelsea fan. He seemed not interested to give me much attention. I hoped a lively conversation would to unfold when I talked about how Chelsea performed well the previous season. Instead, Khaya's response was a simple 'Yeah!' I did much of the search for new topics and questions; what team he supported, the transfer market, who is winning the trophy this season, who is the best coach, what

our respective teams should do to play better in the coming season, and who was the best player in the previous soccer league. He would give one-word responses, even to questions that required some explanation. For instance, while we were discussing soccer, the movie we were watching ended. Without saying a word, Khaya switched to a sports channel and, finding no live event, settled for a repeat match between Manchester United and Paris Saint German. After the match he did not say much except to murmur a few words in a dull cadence before she retired to bed.

The story of Mama Nogwebu, Khaya, Brian and Sylvia feeds into invitations to understand various ways in which belonging in the context of migration is performed ‘from below’ (Alexander et al. 2007). To ‘belong from below’ refers to everyday practices that define social relations as opposed to abstract national policy frameworks that provide blueprints for how social integration should be achieved. In their discussion of migration and minority ethnic ‘communities’ in Britain, Claire Alexander and her colleagues (2007, p.783) demonstrate the “complex contours through which individual, familial, local and collective identities are lived.” They further argue that “minority ethnic ‘communities’ are best understood as arising out of systems of localised ‘personal’ networks which challenge reified and abstract ideas of ‘imagined communities’ and provide insights into the performance of citizenship and belonging ‘from below’” (2007, p.783). Their research produced two versions of ‘community’ which, I believe, are relevant to my analysis of the relations and social boundaries I present here:

On the one hand, there was the notion of abstract cultural communities, which formed the basis for policy provision and assumed a homology between individual and group identity, and cultural and linguistic needs. On the other, there were the more individuated and complex networks of neighbours, family and friends which traversed, fragmented and transcended these communities, which we refer to as ‘personal communities’. It was these personal communities that were inhabited and enacted in the practices of everyday life and provided the main resource for interpreting and other forms of support. While for some people these

personal networks intersected with more formal dimensions of 'community', what became clear was that for others – particularly those people and groups more recently arrived in Britain – the networks were more fractured, contingent and even haphazard than is usually suggested in discussions of 'community' (Alexander et al. 2007, p.790).

We note from the story above that Khaya created social boundaries while her mum tried the best she could to make Brian and Sylvia feel at home. Even Brian's attempt to exonerate Khaya of all the blame for what he called an 'awkward behaviour' fell short in that he (Brian) ended his story by re-emphasising how he felt unwelcome due to Khaya's inhospitality. In other words, Brian could feel that he and his wife were welcome but not welcome; welcome given Mama Nogwebu's hospitality but not welcome due to Khaya's inhospitality. Herein lies the contradictions of belonging (F. Nyamnjoh 2012) I referred to earlier. It is because of these contradictions (ambivalences) of belonging that the reality of migrants' lives is "not as simple and straightforward as often suggested in the catalogue of stereotypes with which they are portrayed" (F. Nyamnjoh 2012, p.66).

At the level of personal networks of belonging and 'friendship' with Mama Nogwebu, Brian felt welcome at Mama Nogwebu's house. However, when that sense of belonging is analysed at the level of family, more serious contradictions began to feature than the ambivalences which Brian felt when he first met Mama Nogwebu in the airplane a couple years back. The social boundaries became messy, even as Khaya partially opened up to discuss soccer with Brian and Sylvia while remaining socially distant to them. Nyamnjoh (2012) has argued that insiders and outsiders should not be defined as essences or permanences frozen in time and space but as 'intimate strangers'. He observes that "being insider or outsider is permanent work in progress, always subject to renegotiation, and is best understood as relational and situational" (2012, p.67).

Without much success, both Brian and Sylvia tried to find a topic for conversation they thought they had in common with Khaya, that is, their love for soccer. I find Glick Schiller and Caglar's (2015) notion of domains of commonality applicable to the approach used by Brian and Sylvia to bridge social boundaries. Glick Schiller and Caglar use the term in

their study of proximal, workplace and institutionally-based social relations between new migrants and local groups in Manchester to argue that social relations are built through focusing on areas of mutual interest. In this regard, they observe, “differences are not constituting factors for the development of urban sociabilities” (Nina Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2015, p.1). By focusing on domains of commonalities, they believe, sociable relations between new migrants and local social groups are developed. In the case of Brian, Sylvia and Khaya, I would say the approach could have worked more effectively if the background to the story was not tainted by unfortunate precedents. Here I am referring to the precedents set by people whom Khaya said took advantage of his mother’s kind heart without reciprocating. In the wake of unfortunate examples set by those who came before Brian and Sylvia, Khaya could not help but to build a wall between himself and all ‘strangers’ who visited his mother.

Tanya and the coloured youth

Church members were not always certain that strangers were brought into their lives by God. On the one hand, you pushed to be generous and to embrace God through Good Samaritan deeds. On the other hand, the devil was also around to pull you from the path of righteousness. When Guti was starting FIFMI in Bindura he related how Satan ‘whispered’ to him to stop wasting money, time and strength helping people (Guti 2011). However, Guti remained resolute, fearless and rebuked the Devil. In this regard, believers who were not yet strong believers in Christ were at risk of falling into the wrong hands. Tanya’s meeting with a group of coloured young men (presented below) gives insights into this situation. Although she was excited about having new friends, the way they distanced themselves from her life the moment she became more committed to attending church was, in Tanya’s view, evidence that they were not in her life for a good reason. The young men ‘were sent’ at a time when Tanya was still an ‘infant believer’ to sidetrack her from her growing devotion to God.

In the chapter on the history of FIFMI I introduced Tanya, in her mid-twenties and a junior pastor in the church. She came to South Africa in 2008 and joined FIFMI a few years later when she was already in South Africa. I first met Tanya through my wife when she visited

us at our apartment in October 2014 to see our new-born baby. She had come with a wife of a PhD colleague of mine. Since that visit she became a regular at our apartment, sleeping over on a few occasions.

When I first met Tanya she, by her own admission, had “grown quite significantly in the knowledge of God and in understanding how God wants his children to relate with the world”. I discuss in Chapter Four some of her views concerning fellowshiping with non-Christians, even if they are her workmates. But her story was not always like that. She admitted that although she never used to indulge in what she called ‘nasty behaviour’ such as premarital sexual intercourse and drinking alcohol, her attendance of church services was irregular. She noted that before she finally came to FIFMI she had attended many mass crusades organised by different churches. In those crusades pastors would invite non-Christians to be born again and Tanya was always among the people to move to the podium to be born again. As a result, she has been “born again and again and again,” she recalled. Ironically, she had never taken being born again seriously and had therefore not experienced what it really means to be a fully committed member of a church. Even the first few years following her conversion in FIFMI were marked by indecision regarding whether she wanted to remain in church for long.

To demonstrate that she was not serious about being a Christian when she started attending FIFMI, Tanya used the case of her friendship with some coloured youths with whom she used to share a compound in Idas Valley, a predominantly coloured neighbourhood in Stellenbosch. She nostalgically narrated the story, starting from the time she met them until they decided to gradually cut social ties with her as she became more committed to FIFMI. What caught my attention when she was narrating her story is the fact that it is the coloured youths who decided to end the relationship and not the other way round. On her part I could only sense warm reminiscences in a manner that seemed to wish for the restoration of the relationship. To me this nostalgia was ironical given Tanya’s current position regarding the establishment of intimate relations with non-Christians. In terms of character, Tanya is a chatterbox. When we first met it did not take me a day to get used to her. By her own admission, she described herself as a “very talkative person,” adding, “*ndine shamwari of all races kusara kwema China chete*. But,

like I am saying, *mabhoyi, maKaradhi, varungu zvese ndinazvo* (I have friends of all races save for the Chinese people. But, like I am saying, black people, coloured people, and white people are all my friends)."

So, how did Tanya become friends with this group of coloured youths? Tanya recalled these youths organising a party and distributing fliers to residents at their apartment complex to notify them and request their permission to hold the party. On the day of the party, Tanya met one of the boys who were distributing the fliers, the boy extended the invitation to her. "In the evening there was a lot of noise which signified that people were really enjoying themselves," Tanya narrated. This attracted Tanya who decided to go to the party "for a few minutes." "On the one hand I did not want to go because to be honest I did not know these boys. You never know what coloured people are thinking of. But then during that time I did not know how to say no to such a tempting invitation. The more I told myself not to go the more I felt this irresistible urge to attend the party. You know that feeling when you are someone who loves joy, if you hear that there is a party you just feel that if you do not attend you would have missed a lot". So Tanya accepted the invitation and attended the party. As she noted, "For sure we really enjoyed ourselves. It was worth it [laughing]. It was just music, drinking wine and beer for those who wanted to and lots of mixing and chatting. I did not see any people who behaved in extremely uncouth manner like having sex and stuff. Otherwise *vaizotidzosea kumashura pakunamata*" (they were going to draw me back in my prayer life). From that day Tanya and the coloured male youths became friends. That group became a platform for the establishment of friendship connections with more coloured people. As she remarked, "Coloured people travel in groups, and once you are a part of them you become a member of their family".

Tanya recalled one Easter holiday when they invited her to visit their rural area in the Karoo. "They welcomed me for three days. It was so fun. It was so pure fun, like you have gone to the real rural area, just in a different language. We really enjoyed ourselves, plucking off fig fruits, playing with cattle, riding bicycles on narrow roads like this (demonstrating the narrowness of the road). There was no electricity, we were living in darkness. Like by this time (around 20h00) we would be sitting around the fire chatting

while others would still be playing. It was just *kumusha* but *pachiKaradhi*. *Tikagocha nyama ye kudu yavanga vatenga. liiii yainaka*” (It was just like our rural area but in the tradition of the coloured people. Then we barbecued kudu meat. It was very delicious.)

Tanya noted that even before she started attending FIFMI her stay in South Africa was never lonely. “God had a way *yekungounza vanhu mandiri zvekuti* (of bringing people into my life that) I never felt lonely. Of course there were times when I thought of home, but I never felt home sick”. This departs from some discourses on migration and social life which portray religious movements as the only social contexts where migrants can feel loved and accepted.

In another twist of the story, Tanya then narrated how she ‘lost’ these friends when she started being committed to attending church and participating in church activities. The relations had now been reduced to mere greetings on the streets. She narrated: “I used to spend weekends at their house in Idas Valley. Sometimes I would visit them on Friday only to come back on Monday. Sometimes they would come to my house and spend the weekend with me.” Now that Tanya attends church her old friends could even change their cellphone numbers and never bother to inform her. Only when she bumped into them on the streets was when they said “ah, didn’t I give you my new number?” According to Tanya, for some time her friends’ change of behaviour used to affect her so much. However, she noted that this changed when she made new friends in church, now all of her friends are people involved in the word of God. “To be honest with you I no longer have friends who are not Christians. Only a few that I am trying to keep as I teach them the word of God,” she added.

Tanya’s experience at the initial stages of attending FIFMI raises a number of questions regarding everyday social boundaries in particular contexts. As a talkative person who has a lot of friends, Tanya could not resist the invitation to a party, an invitation that potentially could lead to more personal social networks being created, networks unrelated to church-based social relations. Even before accepting the invite, she could imagine that by organising parties, the boys in question had domains of commonality (N Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2015) with her, that is, her love for festivity. In the same study that I referred to

above, Glick Schiller and Caglar found that 'random encounters' between migrants and local individuals in Manchester often produced supportive and sympathetic relations.

Tanya also struggled with the thoughts of visiting strangers who she had only met once. At the end, the allure of merry-making overcame her fear of the risk she was taking by attending the party of strangers. She also brought forward the notion of migrants' stereotypical perception of local groups. This stereotype occurred against the desire to relate with the same people who are being feared. The result of Tanya's thought patterns regarding a single event and invitation did not produce a simple linear construction of either fear or intimate liking of local social groups, in this case coloured people. Instead, a host of issues coalesce to inform Tanya's definition of whether or not to attend the party. These include Tanya's own personality (a chatterbox fond of festivities), prior socialisation about local South African groups, and her desire to rebrand her morality to suite her nascent religious appetite, which informed the way she scrutinised the activities that took place at the party (the fear of being drawn away from her prayer life). As an outgoing person, Tanya saw coloured youths as potential associates with whom to enjoy life. At the same time, not only were they strangers, they were also potentially unpredictable and dangerous. Their danger is not only in that they can inflict physical harm but also in their capacity to corrupt a budding prayer warrior. All these ambivalences do not make them likely associates. Needless to say, Tanya still found in them associates and attended their party and many more social functions they later organised. This reflects the fractal nature of social relations. The story articulates the inevitability of intermingling in certain socio-spatial contexts (see Werbner 2001).

Although Tanya's story points to the cordial relations she enjoyed with the coloured youths, she never said anything about the other people who lived with her in the same apartment complex. This is regardless of whether they were local or migrants, something that gives insights into the kind of relations between her and them. Even my attempt to solicit information from her about her other neighbours did not yield much information. When I asked her about how she related with other people in the complex, Tanya only highlighted that most of them "try to live their own lives," a response I took to mean that they had an indifferent approach to social relations.

The Balulekes: Social encounters with a homeless couple

Happenstance events were not always meant to benefit the believer. The belief by FIFMI members was also that when God wants to save his people from darkness, he sends Christians to do the job of converting people. Failure to minister to prospective converts would be tantamount to disobeying God and turning away from God himself. God strategically positioned believers in the lives of others (prospective converts) to minister to them in different ways, including preaching to them. In this regard, it was very important to have the ability of discernment in order to realise when someone had been sent by God for you to assist them. It is with this understanding that I present the story of Baluleke and the homeless couple presented in this section.

I first met Baluleke in 2008 while I was living in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. He was studying towards a masters' degree. My reconnection with him came early 2014 when I started attending FIFMI, where he is now a committed member. Now in his early thirties, married with a one year old daughter, Baluleke is studying for a PhD. After attending my first Sunday church service at FIFMI, Baluleke encouraged me to attend cell groups and church social activities such as men's fellowship meetings and family fun days.

Much of what I present here is based on what I observed during my visits to Baluleke's Wynberg cell group. I also draw on conversational interviews with Baluleke about what cell groups do and why they are an important arm of the church. From participating in cell groups, I learnt that they engage in a number of activities, most of which I discuss in Chapter Three. One of these functions is providing minimal assistance to some homeless people who reside in his neighbourhood. The background to the provision of this assistance lies in Wynberg cell group's physical proximity to many homeless people. Some live as couples, others are single, while others reside as families. I first experienced this situation when I visited Baluleke in December, 2014 to attend the cell group's end of year party. Since Baluleke was busy running around for the party, he assigned his wife's younger sister to meet me at the public taxi rank, which is about ten minutes' walk to Baluleke's apartment.

On our way to Baluleke's apartment there is an open space just next to a main public road. The open space is just opposite Baluleke's apartment complex, a high-rise building with hundreds of apartments. It is this open space that has become home to some homeless people, the majority of whom are mixed race, popularly called 'coloureds' in South Africa. I briefly discussed the precarious condition of these people with the young woman who was escorting me to Baluleke's apartment. She told me that although she did not fear walking from the taxi rank to the apartment, her only source of concern was the homeless people, whom she described as 'harmless but unpredictable.' She narrated to me how she sometimes, at their polite request, half-heartedly gave them a couple of coins out of fear of being physically assaulted. Despite this fear, the woman noted that for the whole year she had been living in the area she never experienced any serious problems with these people. She just made sure she avoided travelling at night. During the time I attended the Wynberg cell group, I became used to this scene of a large volume of homeless people who lived in a predominantly middle class, leafy neighbourhood. Occasionally, I would also give them money to maintain good relations with these 'harmless but unpredictable' residents.

During the period when I attended the Wynberg cell group, members would contribute and buy some bread for the homeless people. The ladies would prepare soup and tea. Every Wednesday after meeting the group would spare the last ten or so minutes of the meeting to go and be with the homeless people. One of the deacons who had the contacts of those who had cellphones would phone them to come and get food. The cell group would also preach to them. Some of them admitted to being addicted to drugs. A few would get converted and indicate their keenness to hear the word of God. Some would take a cell group leader aside and tell him about their situation and what made them to be on the street. The issue of drugs was the biggest problem. Most of those who got converted never made a commitment to come to church.

One day I was discussing with Baluleke the forms of assistance provided by cell groups that draw potential converts to church. In his explanation, and among other issues, he presented a story about one young couple that intermittently lived just outside the main gate of his apartment complex. While this story also includes the cell group as playing a

role, on the whole Mr. Baluleke and his wife were central in the trajectory it took. As other studies reveal elsewhere, services provided by cell groups to fellow members or the outside people “are all personally handled and voluntarily provided by fellow cell members” (Kwon et al. 1997, p.251).

Here I present it here as Baluleke’s personal story of social encounter with a homeless couple whom he and his wife tried to assist in their time of need. I use this story, introduced earlier in the chapter, to discuss a number of issues regarding the contradictions of chance situational encounters, and religious ideologies. The story is also important for rethinking the unidirectional construction of migrants as living a precarious life for which assistance from local social groups is necessary. Although such an understanding highlights the general position of some migrant groups in Cape Town, it departs from articulating the everyday realities of both migrants and local social groups in particular socio-economic contexts.

In the section that follows I present the conversation I had with Baluleke about this homeless couple and the kind of ambivalent relations that developed between Baluleke, his wife and the homeless couple. The story dates back to a period before I started attending the Wynberg cell group. Also, Baluleke told me the story after he had moved out of the Wynberg apartment.

The story of the homeless couple

Among the homeless people Baluleke and his cell group preached to and fed was a young couple, about eighteen years of age, from some coloured place. The young girl, Aaliyah, was pregnant and she was almost due. The mother of the boy passed away and he, Salim, lived with his elder sister and brothers. Aaliyah’s father is alive but the mother passed away and he (the father) lived with a girlfriend. When Salim impregnated Aaliyah, her father, out of disappointment, chased her out of his house. Salim wanted to take Aaliyah to his family’s house, but because he was sharing a small space with his siblings, they refused to accommodate the girl. So, out of love Salim chose to go into the street with his girlfriend.

Since Aaliyah and her boyfriend Salim lived under the bridge just outside Baluleke's apartment, his wife would make some food and give them. One day an old South African woman contacted social workers regarding the living condition of the pregnant woman. Two social workers came to find out if the unborn child would have a proper shelter and to determine if it was necessary to take the child. However, Aaliyah and Salim were reluctant to get assistance from social workers because they had been told that the latter would take their baby away from them. In relation to the couple's reluctance to get assistance from the social workers, Baluleke had the following remarks:

We had many meetings in which we were trying to convince them but they were stubborn. Sometimes ignorance can make one stubborn. We all believe that we know. Even someone who lives in the street believes that he is knowledgeable. And whatever knowledge they have they safeguard it and make decisions based on that knowledge. The situation was testing on our part to remain patient because we could easily say, after all it's your case, you can do whatever you want, I am pulling out. But we couldn't do that because we knew that they were kids and were misinformed, being lowly educated as they were. They didn't understand how the system works. Finally we convinced them to accept the assistance from the social workers, which they agreed.

The couple then told the social workers that they were receiving assistance from the Balulekes. Baluleke's cell group members had planned to donate money to rent a room for the couple, but since donations are sometimes not sustainable, they decided not to do so. Baluleke ended up facilitating the discussion and also contacting the parents of the couple. He convinced the couple to accept assistance from the social workers. In the end Aaliyah and Salim ended up having to go home. It happened that Aaliyah's grandmother passed away and when she went to attend the funeral she met her father. The father then said if she wanted to come back home she was free to do so.

To appreciate the Balulekes for helping them to prepare for the coming of the baby – keeping their baby's clothes and donating to them a few more – the couple even came

back later to show the Balulekes the baby. Although they were Muslim, Aaliyah and Salim promised to come to church with the Balulekes. This never happened because, according to Baluleke, “they were staying outside and did not have a watch, resulting in them missing the time for the church service. Also, because it was during winter they would change places looking for a warm place and avoiding harassment from the police.”

So what ambivalences are in this story? To begin with, the homeless couple is Muslim and therefore, in the general thinking of Pentecostal believers, does not belong to the same family of religious faith. At a more localised level, the homeless couple, by virtue of being homeless, occupied a very lower socio-economic class than the Balulekes. This created the ambivalence of social class. Also, what motivated the encounter is the same factor that should discourage it: on the one hand, the homeless couple is not born again and therefore should not be entertained by Christians. On the other hand, the homeless couple’s precarious position required assistance from Christians since charity work is part of Christian virtues. Also, there are ambivalences in Aaliyah and Salim’s decision to convert from Islam to Christianity: they show their willingness to convert but still evade Baluleke’s effort to take them to church.

While Aaliyah and Salim’s agreement to convert from Muslim can be interpreted in many ways, one sees the expediency that guided the Salim and Aaliyah’s readiness to convert. Salim and Aaliyah had been receiving help from Baluleke and his wife. Here the conversion was perhaps not about what Islam cannot offer spiritually, or what Christianity is able to offer. Rather, it points to the pragmatism demonstrated by Salim in that by converting to Baluleke’s religion, the bonds created would be strengthened and material assistance would be sustained. Even the readiness to go to FIFMI is questioned in that Salim and Aaliyah did not make it easy for Baluleke and his wife to locate them on Sundays, they kept on changing their sleeping venues. Here the contradictions are clear: the part that needed assistance was at times evasive. While the couple resurfaced when in need of something, it was not ready to be a part of Baluleke’s ‘community’ of Christian converts. However, Salim and Aaliyah found it difficult to balance the equation between relating with the Balulekes for material assistance and escaping the invitation to attend church. The boundaries of the two seem to be entangled, and the only way to disentangle

them is to offer promises that they (Aaliyah and Salim) would be glad to attend church. Despite this behaviour, Baluleke still defended the couple, arguing that they had to look for a comfortable space.

Pnina Werbner (Werbner 2013) has argued that religion is not an all-or-nothing institution. Social actors still interact regardless of their religious difference. As she notes, studying multiple identities is important in that it reveals that the social unities being evoked – religion, community, identity, tradition, and nation – are not consensus-based wholes. They are negotiated and renegotiated and are products of “political struggles or alliances” (Werbner 2013). “Rather than the ‘clash of civilisations’ posed by Huntington (1993), oppositions between Islam and Christianity or Judaism themselves represent arguments of identity and political struggles for ‘honour’ and ‘dignity’, not fundamental divisions of dogma” (Werbner 2013).

Studies of Congolese migrants in South Africa (Owen 2011) and Haitians in the USA (Levitt 2003) have demonstrated the need to understand the role of pragmatism and strategism in influencing migrants’ conversion to local churches. When Lyon, one of Owen’s Congolese research participants in Cape Town, moved from Johannesburg to Cape Town he decided to leave a Congolese migrant church to attend a predominantly South African church. In doing so, he was trying to evade the general stigmatisation of the Congolese who live in Muizenberg by South Africans and who are referred to as “the rubbish Congolese” who are uncouth and uncivilized (Owen 2011, p.165). Owen (2011, p.166) notes, “Lyon’s narrative demonstrates that denominational choice is not static. Rather choice is an important factor, as one’s choice of Christian denomination is made according to personal needs and circumstances”. Similarly, when Salim and Aaliyah finally managed to get assistance through the help of Baluleke and the Department of Social Development, they never made an effort to come to church. Their situation was no longer precarious enough to warrant conversion. This points to the strategic use of religious affiliation by migrants (Owen 2011) as well as by local social groups when they need assistance from migrants. In this section I have demonstrated that tactical conversion is not a preserve of migrants.

This story cuts across multiple social divides. It ended up involving the Balulekes, the Balulekes' neighbours (who phoned social workers), the homeless couple, the couple's relatives, social workers, and, indirectly, members of the Balulekes' cell group, and, again indirectly, the church at large. However, it was the two couples who were the key interlocutors. Although Baluleke observed that the story had a happy ending, this was not before the homeless couple had been stereotyped and indexed vis-à-vis their class, and educational status. Salim and Aaliyah were portrayed by Baluleke as ignorant, stubborn, misinformed, and lowly educated. Ironically, they (Salim and Aaliyah) still thought they were more knowledgeable than the people who were working so hard to assist them. Despite this, the Balulekes remained patient, knowing as they did that Salim and Aaliyah were 'just kids' and therefore in need of help from a more mature, more informed, and more educated person. Here class differences – between the Balulekes and the homeless couple – should be reflected through the 'upper class' triumphing, in every aspect, over the 'lower class'. There is a battle for supremacy, intellectually, materially, and spiritually. To leave Salim on the street was also to concede defeat. Winning in this regard is not to be understood in the sense of dominating the other. Ironically, it is about elevating the 'loser' to a better status where he acknowledges his ignorance and stubbornness by moving off the street into a better place. In this sense of 'loss', the homeless couple, by finally agreeing to move into the shelter for the homeless, conceded defeat. This happened after a series of meetings and a lot of convincing from the Balulekes. Social boundaries – between Muslims and Christians, 'lower class' and 'upper class', local and foreigner – were rendered banal, but also complex, by the situation at hand.

However, Salim and Aaliyah did not 'lose' entirely. They employed their 'stubbornness' to refuse to introduce the Balulekes to their close relatives. By so doing, they managed to conceal whatever they did not want the Balulekes to know, including the 'true' circumstances behind what drove them onto the street. Salim and Aaliyah allowed the Balulekes access to their social lives to the extent they deemed necessary for them to receive assistance. Beyond that boundary, there was a wall. In other words, and in keeping with Simmel's (1997) analysis of social boundaries, Salim and Aaliyah strategically and simultaneously crossed and created social boundaries between themselves and the Balulekes.

Brian, Tanya and the Balulekes: complex social boundaries

While the role of Pentecostal churches in fostering a sense of tight-knit ‘communities’ has been supported by studies in Zimbabwe (Maxwell 1998), Ghana (Hackett 2003), and Nigeria (Ayuk 2002), some still question notions of mechanical solidarity. Van Binsbergen (1997, in van Wyk 2014) critiques anthropologists for reverting to the prototype of the village in their conceptualisations of Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCCs) and descriptions of them in terms of convergence and consensus. Ideology and everyday practices do not always converge. In principle, churches, as institutions, may define rules of association, conduct, and dress. However, in reality social situations often impact on ideology in unanticipated ways, resulting in a mismatch between ideology and everyday reality.

At the same time, I suggest, it is not always the case that ideology mismatches with actual social practices. In the context of my study I discovered that sometimes it was not so much about the mismatch than it was about different contingency-based interpretations of the ideology by individual congregants. These interpretations were influenced by factors such as the level of spiritual maturity of individual believers, the time they have spent as members of the church, together with their degree of commitment to church activities. Within the same church some migrant congregants interpret fellowship with non-Christians as constituting an important element of a believer’s duties and responsibilities while others see it as potentially compromising Christian values. At the same time, as I present below, these factors do not result in a straightjacketed response to contingent social situations faced by individual migrant congregants.

More complex still, the same individual believer could interpret and re-interpret a particular church ideology differently at different stages in their Christian life. Thus, soon after her conversion, Tanya enjoyed fellowshiping with her non-Christian South African coloured friends, whom she met by chance as they were informing her about their impending party (which ironically she later decided to attend). However, as she grew in faith, Tanya gradually reoriented her interpretation of loving and fellowshiping with ‘the world’ to mean limited association with them except when preaching to them (see Chapter

Two on history of FIFMI). The implications of this re-interpretation of church ideologies was Tanya's erection of social boundaries between herself and those who did not attend FIFMI. Despite this, sociability beyond church-based social spaces was maintained, even if it was conditional on her interlocutors agreeing to be converted.

Migration, together with the concomitant assistance from various people, provides an opportunity for born-again to define their faith based on their specific experiences during the process of moving. For instance, Daswani (2010, p.448) gives the case of Albert, one of his research participants, who defined Pentecostal Christianity as "not so much about a complete belief system he agreed with or accepted, but rather concerns the specific relationships and experiences with both Christians and non-Christians that have had a powerful effect on his life". Following migration from his father's rural home to Accra, Albert increasingly became dependent on certain fellow Pentecostals who had helped him to move. At the same time, a few relatives assisted him to settle down in Accra, with his uncle and cousin offering him a home.

In some situations, as that of Brian and Mama Nogwebu, the story did not make much reference to religious affiliations and other religion-based identities. What dominated the story was the social encounter, Brian's predicament and how it was addressed in unanticipated ways. When Brian was chatting with Mama Nogwebu in the flight he did not mention much about his religious background. The issue of religion only surfaced subtly. Similarly, Mama Nogwebu made no mention of her religious affiliation. What we see here is that social situations can override religious and migrant identities in banal ways. This, however, depends on what spurred the situational encounter, because in some instances conversion can be the motive for sustaining relations. For instance, the Balulekes were aware that Salim and Aaliyah were Muslim but, rather than cutting ties with them, they became more eager to convert the homeless couple. Contrary to this, Brian was timid to converse with Mama Nogwebu because, among other considerations, he was not sure about her religious affiliation (what if I greet her and she says "As-Salaam-Alaikum?"). He was not interested in converting Mama Nogwebu to become a member of FIFMI. Brian was more interested in maintaining distance between himself and Mama Nogwebu, and any other passenger in the airplane for that matter, and to respect his perception of the

etiquette of airplane passengers. Thus the contexts and motives for either engagement or disengagement in the two cases were different. Although the socio-economic classes of the social actors in each story were discordant, the scripts of the stories are unique in their own settings.

I want to further develop my argument about how individual migrant congregants differently interpret church ideologies by considering Baluleke's encounter with the homeless couple. Baluleke has been a member of FIFMI for more than two decades. He is also an active church member, as is evidenced by his leadership role in cell group activities. When I was conducting fieldwork for this research Baluleke was appointed deacon, a promotion which one gets based on levels of commitment to church activities and on spiritual maturity. His knowledge of church rules and regulations was therefore advanced. Unlike Tanya, Baluleke interpreted FIFMI ideology regarding association with non-Christians to mean providing material assistance and inviting them to his house whenever necessary. This was his understanding of Christian love, fellowship and contact with 'the world'. His situational social encounter with the homeless couple may not be divorced from his Christian identity and church position as cell group leader. At the same time, the way Baluleke and his wife handled the case of the homeless couple cannot be solely attributed to expectations of them as leaders; it was also about their agency regarding how they address impromptu situations. For ultimately, when social workers came in to assist the homeless couple, it was the Balulekes who played a significant role in making sure the couple received the help they much needed.

At the same time, to argue that congregants' levels of commitment to church activities uniformly determine their interpretation of church ideologies vis-à-vis contingent social situations and social boundaries is also inadequate. Although Tanya and Baluleke were strongly committed to church activities, their understanding of social engagement with non-Christians was significantly different. Soon after she got converted, Tanya struggled to retain her South African coloured friends as they tried to cut social ties with her. She would have nostalgic memories of what she used to do with her friends, resulting in her wanting to maintain contact with them. However, as she became more committed to church programmes, Tanya, now a junior pastor in FIFMI, increasingly attached stricter

conditionalities to interacting with non-Christians (see Chapter Three). On the contrary, the more the Balulekes became committed to church activities, the more they reconnect with 'the world'. Their approach was similar to that of Brian and Sylvia who, despite having been members of FIFMI for more than a decade, did not play an active role in church ministries. In other words, their level of commitment may not equal that of Baluleke and Tanya. Nevertheless, the explanations for the close social relations with 'the world' are different for Baluleke and for Brian and Sylvia.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to discuss various contingent social situations and how FIFMI congregants respond to them in ways that render social boundaries ambivalent and messy. My analysis demonstrated the contradictions that frame individual migrant congregants' ways of addressing such social situations. I also discussed various factors that inform such inconsistencies and ambivalences. There are a couple of factors that unite the stories I have presented in this chapter: they are all chance encounters; they develop into sustained relations, albeit in different directions; they point to contradictions of social boundaries in different respects. At the same time their different settings and outcomes are important in that they articulate the diversity of everyday life and the different ways in which FIFMI ideologies are subjectively interpreted by individual church members. These variable and often ambivalent interpretations reflect many aspects of individual congregants: commitment to church activities and the value attached to church ideology in everyday life, time spent in the church, different personality traits of individual congregants, and socialisation. To understand social relations and social boundaries, therefore, is to contend with this messiness of social relations in particular contexts. It is also to understand the varying and often contradicting significance attached to religious affiliation by individual congregants in the situations they find themselves in. Some situations are experienced as if the person does not even attend church while others have church doctrines and ideologies as their focal points.

CHAPTER SIX: LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATION

Introduction

In this chapter I present the messiness of the process and the contradictions between the ideals and complex realities of securing housing and what this meant for social boundaries between the ‘community’ of congregants and other urban residents who did not attend FIFMI. The contradictions and messiness of looking for accommodation were demonstrated in that, while in theory church members made an effort to live together – as was evidenced by setting up church social media groups where members shared information about accommodation – in reality, congregants did not always (want to) share accommodation with fellow church mates. The fear of straining social relations and the need to remain out of social surveillance from church mates were some of the factors that contributed to this reluctance to share accommodation. The implication of this disjuncture was that individual migrants generally talked about the importance of a physically proximal ‘community’ and ‘family’ of believers but their experiences did not always reflect this idea of a community. The irony of the congregants’ experiences was that even members who were active in setting up social media groups – Facebook and WhatsApp groups for men, women, and the youths – rarely used them to look for accommodation. This did not stop them from encouraging fellow church members to use the social media platform to look for housing. I suggest that in the search for accommodation, individual congregants were neither always open to sharing with both church mates and non-church mates nor completely closed to the possibility of sharing with either party. Rather, individual congregants considered different contexts as they presented themselves.

The messiness

For both newcomers and established migrants, finding accommodation was usually one of the most challenging priorities. Research was conducted on the different ways in which migrants make use of different kinds of networks to look for apartments. These could be friendship networks, family networks or church networks (Sibanda 2010; Worby 2010; Hungwe 2013a). FIFMI members were not exceptional in this regard. Various platforms were created for members to network as they looked for apartments where, preferably,

they could live amongst themselves rather than live together with people whose social and religious backgrounds they were not familiar with. However, while the church had WhatsApp and Facebook groups for its members to look for accommodation, very few people used it. In seeking answers to why this was the case, I learnt that it was not just about not liking what was on the site. Instead, the reasons largely had to do with the logics that were implicated within the church. The logics were about the church's systems of 'surveillance' on its members and the congregants' need for freedom. This was not because they wanted to misbehave, but just to maintain a certain level of distance from close inspection of their daily lives. People sometimes experienced the guidance, care and follow-ups by various leaders of the church to be constraining. Members often expressed this desire for freedom in many ways, some direct while others were more indirect. For instance, Bernard talked about the challenge of being treated like a child when he was staying with a church elder (see more detail below). Pastors and elders also encouraged people to communicate when they were traveling out of town.

As I present below, while church leaders saw this surveillance as a way of making sure the congregants were doing well where they lived, the members did not always look at it that way. One Sunday (November 2014), when the church service had just started, the presiding pastor, Pastor Lawrence, talked about the need for church members to invite him for social visits to their apartments, and also to visit one another. He started by acknowledging and appreciating those who had managed to pay him a courtesy visit at his house. He bemoaned the fact that some church members had never made an effort to know where he lived, adding that it was important to pay each other visits and to fellowship as congregants. According to the pastor, while it was important to have church members who visited his family, it was equally important that they invited pastors to see where they lived. He implored the congregants to practice the affection and mutual love that they learnt about through church teachings. Pastor Lawrence was worried that since most of the church members were migrants who may not have people with whom to establish intimate face-to-face encounters beyond other congregants, they may feel isolated and lonely. He also said that some believers lived a dual life characterised by the 'choreographed' and 'real' experiences. The choreographed life was the life they led in church, characterised by elegant deportment in dressing that gave the impression that all

was well where they lived. This, to the pastor's knowledge, was not always what transpired in the private contexts of their lives. The pastor went on to relate one of the courtesy visits he paid one church deacon at his house. Although the deacon was gainfully employed, his house did not reflect his financial status. It had threadbare curtains, an old-fashioned couch, a tiny television set, among other old-fashioned property. The pastor then invited the deacon to his house where he showed him around the house, which had a 42-inch plasma television, exquisite couches and curtains. He chided the deacon regarding the state of his house. That very week, said the pastor, the deacon withdrew R30, 000 and refurnished the whole house. The pastor ended his story by saying: "if I visit you, not only do I want to see where you sit, but also where you sleep".

As Pastor Lawrence talked about the need for him and other church leaders to know how church members were living, I was curious as to how the congregants conceived of this form of social surveillance conducted for the good of the members. Prior to this call by Pastor Lawrence, Shu, who sang in the church choir, had informed me about why some church members were uncomfortable with fellow congregants visiting their apartments. Shu chronicled a story of one church member who was in the church choir and who always attended Sunday services smartly dressed. One day, fellow choir members paid her a surprise visit. They were surprised to learn that her apartment was a single room which had been sub-divided into three tiny sections to make room for her children. The member could not hide her shame. This living condition did not reflect the blessed kind of life that a child of God was expected to live.

I also discovered during fieldwork that this call for congregants to visit each other was not being observed by most congregants. Reasons for this were as diverse as the class background and ages of members who were giving them. Some had to do with time constraints, while for others, as alluded to in the case of the compartmentalised room above, it had to do with the shame associated with inviting church members to a home that was considered to be in a poor condition. For others it was just a culture of preferring not to "aimlessly go to other people's houses", as Miso put it. In cases where the reason for not inviting others was due to their unpleasant living conditions, time limitations became the most convenient excuse.

This discomfort was not shared across all sections of the church. For instance, members of the church's football team had a flexible policy regarding which member would host them when they had free time, which was usually on Saturdays and Sunday after the church service. The group always rotated their visits to fellow team members without necessarily making it mandatory for all the members to host the team. What I also observed was that very few members felt uncomfortable inviting team mates to their apartments.

FIFMI members were scattered around more than thirty mostly low and medium density neighbourhoods of Cape Town. Some even came from Cloeteville, a predominantly coloured suburb in the town of Stellenbosch. Since the Salt River Assembly was the first of four FIFMI branches to be established in Cape Town, it had a wider presence and sphere of influence, especially among Zimbabwean migrants who attended ZAOGA or related Pentecostal movements in Zimbabwe (see Wilson 1979). In addition, when the Salt River branch was officially established, ZAOGA leadership deployed a youthful, vibrant, and spiritually 'giant' pastor whose widely followed programmes on Ezekiel TV, the church's television channel, had already made him prominent.

In the following section, I focus on the diversity of initial settlement of individual congregants. This approach gives insights into the realities and messiness of the initial settlement patterns of migrants. After this, I will proceed to present and discuss the diverse dynamics of subsequent relocations from one apartment and/or neighbourhood to another.

The diversity of initial settlement

In this section I present the many ways in which migrant congregants come to South Africa and how this informs the sometimes contradictory strategies they deploy to find accommodation. The key contact migrants from FIFMI whom I worked with presented diversity with regard to their initial settlement in Cape Town. Although they had the common identity of being members of FIFMI, individual migrants' initial settlement experiences in South Africa were by no means uniform. Although this diversity has not been a subject of much research, it is not unique to Zimbabwean migrants, as Khalaf and

Alkobaisi (1999) show in their study of labour migrants in the Gulf. Khalaf and Alkobaisi (1999) found that labour migrants could come through job agents, construction companies, as direct job applicants or kinship or friendship ties. Construction companies usually recruited migrants as a group for a specific project and provided accommodation until the project was completed. Those who came as direct job applicants had flexible options to look for accommodation of their own choice. Unskilled and semi-skilled migrants adopted a "wait and see" attitude (Khalaf & Alkobaisi 1999, p.288) to securing accommodation, whereby where and when they get a job would also determine whether they stayed with or move out of the homes of kin and friends who accommodated them.

Here I give a snapshot of the congregants' profiles, with a key focus on how they initially found accommodation when they came to Cape Town. Their profiles did not always show that the religious affiliation of the contact person for accommodation was a priority when considering where to stay. Some joined the church when they came to South Africa and they looked for accommodation anywhere they felt comfortable living. Even those who were already members of FIFMI when they arrived in South Africa used convenient channels available to secure accommodation.

Tanya came to South Africa as a student at a prestigious culinary college. Although she did not have any scholarship, her parents could afford to take care of her accommodation, subsistence and fees, with the fees alone taking up R50, 000 per year on average. Tanya opted to be a non-resident student and found an apartment in Idas Valley through an estate agent before she had even arrived in South Africa. She stayed at the same apartment for about three years, after which she got a flat in town on OLX⁹. What motivated her to relocate was that she had completed her course and had been offered a job by a certain fast-food outlet in the central business district, and she wanted to move closer to her workplace. She noted that she had no problem during her stay in Idas Valley, save the general fear that she was living in a predominately coloured area and did not

⁹ Like Gumtree, OLX is an online advertising platform where one can buy or sell anything from electronics, to property, to pets to vehicles (see www.olx.co.za).

feel comfortable given the widespread stereotypes that coloured people are violent. I discussed this stereotype in Chapter Four.

While Tanya was coming to school, Zakeo came to Cape Town in 2008 on holiday at the invitation of his brothers. He was still single. At that time Zimbabwe was experiencing hyperinflation and Zakeo had just returned from the rural areas where he was a temporary teacher. When the holiday period was over he wanted to return to Zimbabwe, but his brothers advised him not to return to Zimbabwe because it would be difficult for him to return if he later decided to do so. So, he somewhat reluctantly lived with them for a couple of months. When he started working as a teacher at a private college in town, Zakeo moved out to rent a room in a house owned by a single South African woman who was a traditional healer (see Chapter Three). There were three other tenants from Malawi who were already residing there. Zakeo found out about this room through an advertisement posted at a shopping centre.

In another case, Bernard came to Cape Town in late 2008 and was invited by the church pastor, Pastor Divine, single at that time, to come and stay with him. Bernard, who was still in his early twenties, grew up as a member of FIFMI and was already a professional musician who played nearly all musical instruments, something that motivated Pastor Divine to offer him accommodation as a way to encourage him to join the church music department. When Pastor Divine was reassigned to another branch, Bernard went to live with a female church elder who was a widow. This time he had his own room in the elder's apartment and was paying rent. Unfortunately, he did not enjoy being treated 'like a child', so after a few months he decided to move out, this time to share a room with his biological brother who had joined him in Cape Town. It is this experience of staying with church members that shaped his resolve never to share accommodation with church mates again.

Baluleke has been in South Africa since early 2000s. He came as an undergraduate student on a Government of Zimbabwe scholarship. He obtained undergraduate and masters' degrees at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape Province where he was living in university accommodation for the entire duration of his stay there. I first met

him in the Eastern Cape Province where we were attending the same Pentecostal church. Baluleke's first experience living off-campus was when he moved to Cape Town in 2010 to start a PhD at the University of Cape Town. During the six years he has been in Cape Town, Baluleke has relocated a couple of times. In each process of relocation, he has used multiple means to find accommodation depending on the situation at hand.

Brian has a degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Zimbabwe. After working for a few years in Zimbabwe, he came to Johannesburg at the invitation of a friend, who is a member of FIFMI. It is the same friend who gave him accommodation during the time he was in Johannesburg. When he moved to Cape Town, he had been offered a job by a certain construction company. The same company gave him a place where he could stay for three months while he looked for a permanent apartment. When he secured one on Gumtree, it was a specious three-bedroom apartment with a separate lounge and a kitchen. Since Brian did not need all the rooms, he opted to sublet two bedrooms. Again, he advertised on Gumtree and two single male tenants, one South African and another Ugandan, took up the offers. Both are not members of any religious organisation.

In addition to the examples I have given above, there are many others whose experiences added to the diverse nature of congregants' hunt for accommodation. For example, I met migrants who just abandoned their middle class jobs as bankers, nurses, teachers when Zimbabwe's hyperinflation was at its peak, that is, from 2007 to early 2009 when the multicurrency economy was introduced during the government of national unity between the country's main political parties. The majority of the migrants managed to secure work permits under the Dispensation of Zimbabweans Project¹⁰ of April 2009 and went on to find jobs in areas of their specialisation, but not before they had gone through a rough economic patch. Some had to be accommodated in temporary shelters while others had to endure residence in *mukoko*, a squalid, crowded single sex room in which migrants

¹⁰ This is a project instituted by the Government of South Africa, through the Department of Home Affairs, to give work permits to hundreds of thousands of Zimbabweans in South Africa, the majority of whom had, until then, been living in the country as illegal migrants. Between 1 September and 31 December, 2010, the project received 294, 511 applications, from which 242, 731 applicants were successfully considered to work, study or conduct business in South Africa (<https://africacheck.org/factsheets/what-does-the-new-special-dispensation-permit-mean-for-zimbabweans-in-sa/>).

who fail to be accommodated by relatives or friends live before they establish themselves financially. While some who failed to secure decent employment eventually made *mukoko* their permanent place of residence (see Worby 2010), the congregants I worked with talked about it in passing.

Although the congregants I had conversations with talked about *mukokos*, they were comfortable narrating other people's experiences and not their own. Thus, even those who had a brief stint at the *mukoko*, given the shame associated with that kind of life, employed a convoluted grammatical mix of first person, second person and third person points of view even when they referred to their own experiences. Thus, one member, Vusa, who now works for a marketing company, narrated the ordeal of life in the *mukoko* in the following fashion:

People go for days without taking a bath. They will be afraid even of getting into the shower room because they risk tripping: the room is so slippery and filthy from lack of good hygiene. When they wash clothes they make sure to remain at the washing line until their clothes have dried up. Otherwise that will be the last time to see the clothes. Some do not even cook for days, relying on bread and the cheapest juice they can get from supermarkets. Even if you have the food to cook, you cannot do so three times in a day because you risk attracting the envy of others who will be in direr conditions. So you just pretend to be in the same situation as they are in.

Even though I tried to probe Vusa to understand his personal experiences, he used neutral and depersonalized explanations about life in the *mukokos*. However, based on the detailed account he gave of life in the *mukoko*, I was led to believe that he might have lived there, perhaps just for a brief stint.

What brought the migrants to the *mukoko* – which often housed between thirty and forty people – was their uncertain and insecure condition, not necessarily their social networks or religious affiliation. People in the *mukoko* were a mixed bag: there were Pentecostalists, Evangelicals, African Traditionalists, witchdoctors, and those who claimed not to be members of any organised religious group. Topics on religion were

avoided as co-tenants feared that debates could easily turn nasty. Prayers, when they were made, were not loud, and one could not easily tell if a co-tenant was Pentecostal, or Evangelical or Muslim just by observing the movement of lips. Sheila, now a teacher in Cape Town, opened up about her brief experience in the *mukoko* and related her rude awakening. She had seen someone reciting a prayer in a very low voice and assumed the person was a Christian:

I had just arrived at the *mukoko* and did not know much about the kind of people who live there. I saw this lady lying on a mat and saying words which I could not hear clearly. For a few minutes she continued in that state. I was so convinced she was praying. I waited for her to finish what she was doing. When she was done, I excitedly approached her to greet her. I was so happy to meet my first [Christian] believer. She gladly responded to my greeting, but, to my greatest surprise, her mood suddenly changed when I said, 'So which church do you attend? I think I saw you praying, I'm also Christian'. She just looked at me and said, 'You believe everybody in this room is Christian, right?' I had not prepared myself for her question. So I apologised and withdrew to my bed.

Here we see what happens when social actors, whether knowingly or unknowingly, trespass prescriptions, that is, the codes and values that govern inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations (Barth 1998). In Barth's view, as long as people select what to say or not to say in view of particular situations, then stable inter-ethnic relations can prevail. However, as demonstrated above, stable inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations are not easy to build when diverse individuals who live together trespass one another's belief systems. Although this sometimes happens unintentionally, as in the case of the interaction between the Muslim and the Christian discussed above, it is not always forgiven by the victim.

While established migrants were sometimes castigated for refusing to offer new migrants a place to live (Worby 2010), the new migrants sometimes, for personal situations, avoided seeking residence with more established migrants. Here I give a brief example

of Marshall to support this point. Marshall, a cousin of mine who is a university graduate, was working in the banking sector in Zimbabwe. His future looked bright. Then something terrible happened: some men approached him with a seemingly lucrative business proposal and invited him to be part of their project. In return, Marshall had to help them to secure capital to start the project, which ran into tens of thousands of US dollars. Needless to say the project never kicked off and the 'business partners' disappeared, leaving Marshall with mountains of debts to repay. When deadlines to repay his debtors passed and he was unable to pay back the money, some creditors even threatened to manhandle him. So Marshall escaped to Cape Town in 2012 where he found himself sleeping on the street. Although he had a few relatives in Cape Town to whom he could turn to for assistance, for fear of being more easily apprehended, he preferred not to have his whereabouts known by many people.

When I came to Cape Town in January, 2014, I managed to contact Marshall and later made an appointment to meet with him in the city centre. I wanted him to take me to shops where I could find blankets and duvets in preparation for Stellenbosch's nasty winter season. While we were moving around the city centre, Marshall was showing me some of the open spots where he once slept. He told me that he always avoided sleeping at the same place, preferring to 'confuse' potential stalkers by moving from one spot to another. This had its own implications since sometimes he ended up encroaching into spots 'permanently' claimed by some homeless groups. At the same time, Marshall joked with me that during the few months he slept on the street he had to become like the hardcore street dwellers just to avoid being constructed as weak. Being seen as fragile would make him an easy target for bullying. This also entailed minimally sharing food with street mates.

Through Marshall's experience, I discovered that whether one decided to use personal networks (see Alexander et al. 2007) or deployed 'less dignified options' to secure accommodation, was a product of certain personal situations that informed individual migrants' move to South Africa. Personal experiences varied from migrant to migrant. Worby (2010) observes that some old Zimbabwean migrants deployed several means to avoid the responsibility of looking after new migrants. They socially disconnecting

themselves from relatives and friends back home. Some chose not to give their residential addresses and phone numbers to relatives or did not reply to calls or letters. Others switched off their cellphones when a relative arrived in South Africa and tried to phone them. While there were some who were willing to assist new migrants, others saw the responsibility as 'unenviable' (Worby 2010). The salaries or wages they earned were too meagre to take care of themselves, remit back home and still be able to accommodate friends and relatives.

Another challenge was that some old migrants were not living in a dignified apartment and were ashamed to let relatives from home know about their precarious life. Some migrants who failed to offer assistance to subsequent migrants did so because they too did not receive the kind of assistance they hoped to get when they arrived as new migrants. The fear that new migrants may engage in criminal activities or fall sick added to established migrants' reluctance to assist the former. There were also Zimbabweans who chose to change their citizenship in order to overcome the stigma of being foreign. They purchased papers or 'paper parents', that is, they connived with locals who then adopted them as their children. Once adopted, these Zimbabweans became untraceable to their relatives back home. Some, instead of sending groceries to relatives in Zimbabwe, ended up sending them to their new fictive kin in order to maintain the valuable social networks that enabled them to get more favours (Worby 2010). These stories did not imply that all Zimbabweans were reluctant to assist friends and relatives who moved to South Africa. There are some who, regardless of how they initially settled in South Africa, glad to help others who came after them. Some migrants related that even though they were "helped by strangers" (Worby 2010, p.426) to settle in South Africa, they did not want new migrants to go through similar precarious experiences as they went through.

However, as Marshall's case demonstrates, it is also possible that these new migrants deliberately opted not to seek assistance from more established migrants. When individual migrant congregants decided not to use certain networks, they carved out new social relations with socially discordant groups. Such social boundaries were ambivalent given the disparate religious, social and economic worlds these social actors came from. The transgression of social boundaries, for instance, through acts of sharing on the

streets, pointed to this 'uneasy harmony' between the people sharing. Marshall came from a middleclass background where he could afford to live in a decent apartment. However, he was driven by the shift in fortunes to share 'accommodation' and food with people who, at least in his thinking, were probably from a considerably less economically advantaged background as his.

To attach a formula to migrants' experiences of finding accommodation falls short of acknowledging the diverse ways through which they came and established themselves. Just as their personal networks, or lack thereof, and ways in which they came to South Africa were different, so also were the approaches they adopted to find accommodation. Some of these approaches were so different from one congregant to another that they seemed as if they did not attend the same church. Approaches were also products of situations that contributed to individual congregants' decisions to move to South Africa.

Subsequent relocations and the dialectics of church social media

In this section I discuss subsequent relocations that deliberately focused on moving away from fellow church mates in ways that reveal another level of everyday boundary-making and unmaking. In the subsequent stages of settlement and resettlement, individual congregants had access to diverse church-based social media and other social and personal networks that they could use to secure one or two rooms in a church mate's apartment. Ironically, many chose not to use such avenues, and they provided various reasons for this. The most common reason was the fear of negatively affecting social relations with church mates through the familiarity that could result from everyday contact. Other reasons were more personal and context specific. These included being choosy in the choice of accommodation, considering the number of tenants already living in the

prospective apartment, and the degree of one's desperation at the time of looking for an apartment.

There are many members who communicated about accommodation via various church based ministries' social media groups¹¹. Here contacts were exchanged and inquiries made. Although there was no concrete church department dedicated to assisting those looking for accommodation, it was at this level that church members assisted each other. The idea of social media groups was also developed in view of the fact that congregants were spread out across Cape Town. Social media groups became a proxy for the 'community' and facilitated the quick flow of information regarding various issues. Some who had jobs posted on those groups. One of the more active groups was the Men of Integrity group, where both those who wished to sublet rooms in their apartments met those who were looking for accommodation. On the Men of Integrity WhatsApp group, members also posted adverts for drivers, plumbers, electricians, and auxiliary social workers. At the time of conducting this study, the Men of Integrity, using their WhatsApp group and also email communication, were creating a database for all the professional qualifications of church members. This would help church members to look within the church for professional services before they considered other service providers. Unfortunately, members seemed to be committing less time to the project and it had taken more time than had been anticipated to be finalised.

Yet there was an ambivalent response by the group members to the social media group they founded. Although these efforts pointed to attempts by church members to assist each other in finding accommodation, among other things, in reality not many ever used the provision offered by the church ministries through their social media groups to look for houses. Interestingly, members generally agreed in their meetings that they were doing a good thing by organising themselves and using a church-based forum to look for accommodation. Many, however, usually used Gumtree "because on Gumtree they post

¹¹ These are age- and gender-based ministries such as Men of Integrity, Women of Integrity, and the Youth Ministry.

everything on their website and you quickly see the details of what you are looking for”, argued Vusa.

Members gave many excuses why they did not use the Men of Integrity group to look for accommodation, such as, “when the men’s WhatsApp group was created I was not looking for accommodation”, “It is only recently that I have been looking for accommodation but I didn’t use the group”, “I contacted some members of the group just in case they came across offers for accommodation. However, I was working more with Gumtree”, and “I am looking for two rooms, and on this group most adverts are for single rooms.”

What also supposedly contributed to the men’s WhatsApp group’s limited success in linking accommodation seekers was that it was only created in 2014. Before the current men’s committee was elected there was no active Men of Integrity Committee. “Although it was there in spirit”, noted one member of the committee, “it was not visible.” In fact, the current committee considered itself to be the first committee at the Salt River assembly. This was so because the previous committee had no formal structures. So when the current committee met for their first meetings, they decided to form the Men of Integrity WhatsApp group. Then they decided to coopt more members to assist them as a committee. Later, the group was instructed by the senior pastor to merge with the FIFMI’s sister assembly in Athlone to form a single committee. Although the Men of Integrity group was a fairly recent development, it has been more effective in communicating other news – job advertisements, obituaries, and weddings – than those to do with accommodation.

Baluleke: Responding to emergency situations

Even the leaders of the Men of Integrity did not always use the social media groups they created when they look for accommodation. While the social media groups were there, in reality they did not provide a substitute to other means of looking for accommodation that, save general considerations, pointed to the personal preferences and situations of the congregants. For instance, some search strategies were informed by desperation and emergency, and the ambivalence of social boundaries needs to be understood within that context. For example, when Baluleke was thrown into desperation following the

termination of his contract and the last-minute somersault by a prospective landlord, he deployed a multiplicity of strategies to look for accommodation. What made Baluleke's case more ironic than others was that he, together with a few other men, was the brains behind the formation of church social media groups. However, as I present below, Baluleke and his family rarely use church-based social media groups. There were a couple of contradictions regarding the Balulekes' search for an apartment: although they fussed about dirty apartments and untidy landlords, the apartment they settled for was very dirty; they preferred optimally populated apartments but found themselves living in an overcrowded place and; they preferred sharing apartments with Christian tenants but avoided church social networks as a strategy to look for co-tenants.

I had an opportunity to be with Baluleke as he looked for accommodation and what it meant for his everyday social relations. When Baluleke, his wife and their then eighteen-month old daughter received a notice that their contract in Wynberg was not going to be renewed, they immediately searched on Gumtree and found two bedrooms in Heathfield. However, when they were about to move in the owner of the flat decided not to let the flat. Baluleke had to change his search strategy. He initially looked on Gumtree for two bedrooms, only to switch to a single bedroom when he realised that time was running out and it was a bit late, being a month-end. While Baluleke was looking for the single room he was not prepared to take whatever came his way. "The thing is you also consider who is staying in the other rooms of the same flat, how big the flat is and all those issues. Also, when you now have a family – a wife and a child – it becomes more difficult because most people prefer sharing their flat with a single person. This means that our scope was limited. So we had to negotiate," he recalled.

This process of searching for accommodation required me to be 'on the ground' when Baluleke was hunting for a place to live. So during this time, I joined him for two days. This afforded me an opportunity to see how exactly he went about his search and how he contacted people both in and outside the church networks. On the first day we woke up, checked a room in Wynberg, only to find that it was very dirty. Baluleke was also constantly checking on Gumtree. Actually, he might have lost a considerable amount of

airtime money as he phoned prospective landlords whose contacts were advertised on Gumtree.

We went to Goodwood to check another ‘filthy room’. As we were waiting for the train back home we saw an advertisement by a Malawian family in Woodstock who was looking for either a Zimbabwean or Malawian couple. Baluleke called them and negotiated with them after which we went there. When we saw the place we discovered that it was so small that it would not fit a bed and couch; it was just big enough for a bed. Also, the flat was very dirty, and we could see sewerage flowing outside. Inside the house there were about six people who were overcrowded in the small rooms. They had converted the dining room into a bedroom. If Baluleke and his family had joined them, there would be nine tenants in that very small flat. Baluleke was not prepared to take up that offer and live in such an environment with his wife and daughter. The same day we went to inspect many single rooms, only to find that they did not meet the Balulekes’ expectations. This attention to the quality of apartment is contrary to Siziba’s (2014) Zimbabwean research participants in Johannesburg, some of whom were so desperate that they would even divide a room with a curtain and sublet part of the room.

The following morning, we drove to every grocer shop, including Pick-n-Pay, Shoprite, checking on their notice boards for accommodation offers in Cape Town’s southern suburbs of Claremont, Rondebosch, and Mowbray. At the Mowbray Shoprite notice board we found Banji’s contact details. It was this Nigerian widower who offered Baluleke a single room. Banji arranged for them to meet at the flat. So we came and waited for him to come back from church. Banji is also a pastor, something the Balulekes appreciated – they said they had prayed to get a Christian landlord.

When Banji arrived he showed us the place. The whole flat was also very dirty; even worse than the previous apartments we had inspected. Despite its state, the Balulekes decided to take the offer. Deploying Simmel’s (1991) conceptualisation of boundaries, it would seem that the Balulekes were bounded in every direction *and* they were bounded in no direction, being confined in their choices yet still defying these constraints by

exercising their agency. The same week Baluleke and wife had to do a thorough cleaning of the house.

Although the Balulekes preferred an apartment with few tenants, they were sometimes thrown into a dilemma by those who unexpectedly added to their numbers owing to the exigencies of the life of tenants in general. When the Balulekes started staying with Banji, he was living alone in the two-bedroom apartment, which also had a sitting room and a kitchen. However, after a few months, they were joined temporarily by another couple from Nigeria who arrived due to Banji's compassion for their situation. The couple was in a similar situation to the Balulekes' predicament before they found the single room in Mowbray; they had moved out of their apartment and failed to secure alternative accommodation in time. When I visited Baluleke in January 2016, the couple had been squatting in the sitting room for a week. Baluleke said he had no problem sharing the apartment with them for a while. In fact, he understood what they were going through and the effect it had on them as a family.

At the same time, the Balulekes also understood the complications the family's presence entailed in terms of sharing limited resources and space. The husband slept on the couch while his wife and younger child slept on the floor. The other child slept on another couch. In addition, the couple was not a member of any organised religion, something that made the Balulekes uncomfortable. While Baluleke confessed that he had prayed for a Christian landlord, he now had to negotiate new social relations. He now had to be open to negotiating new social boundaries (Wessendorf 2014); opening them to Banji, with whom they now shared much, both religiously and socially (see Chapter Six), and closing certain boundaries to the other couple without being hostile to them. Such challenges posed a dilemma for the Balulekes regarding whether to continue living in the apartment or to terminate the contract. In the end, they weighed the pros and cons and decided to stay and to accept the new social dynamics. This entailed being sensitive about stories to share and not to share when they are conversing with Banji and the couple. This speaks to Lofland's (1989) notion of 'being civil towards diversity', that is, being mindful of other social groups' social, political, religious and cultural tastes. Departing from Hungwe's (2013a) suggestion that church members 'bond' amongst themselves even in their

patterns of residence, they often consider a number of factors before they take up an offer.

Brian and Sylvia: The bridge-bond dialectics

Brian, whose story of coincidental encounter with a South African female MP I discussed in Chapter Four, was adamant that using church networks was one of the things he never considered when looking for accommodation. He just went to property agents and talked to them. Brian did not see looking for accommodation through church mates as one of the best options available. He did not understand why he had to look for a house through someone in Cape Town which is full of property agents who could find him a place specific to his personal preferences, whether it was a bachelor's apartment or two bedrooms. He noted that even if he chose not to visit housing agents physically he could always check on the internet for a flat of his liking. "*Harisiro here basa rana OLX, Gumtree nemamwe mawebseite?* (Is that not what Gumtree and other property websites are there for?)"

Brian was skeptical about being a co-tenant with fellow church members, but he also believed they were the people most likely to assist him in times of serious challenges. He thought that using church social media to look for accommodation would only serve to unnecessarily publicise his private life to people, some who were probably not ready to assist him. He believed that not everyone who came to church had a genuine concern to help. Some would actually look at you and wonder why you still had not bought a house. Maybe they would be looking at you and the car you drive and would be thinking that you must be living in a mansion. Brian discouraged church members from exposing their private life by using the church for services it was not meant to provide.

Although Brian and his wife Sylvia preferred not to share accommodation with fellow church members, they appreciate it when church mates visited them at their apartment. In fact, they lamented the congregants' habit of not visiting each other. As he remarked:

I think it's a good thing for church members to check on each other. You know, some of us do not have relatives here in Cape Town, we rely on church friends and other friends outside the church for social life. It will be

good to have people from church come to our flat for a braai or something and not wait for a funeral or any other problem. I think it's a good thing not to be visited more regularly though.

This exhortation for members to visit one another was also reiterated by church leadership during Sunday services. For example, Pastor Lee strongly encouraged church members to be their brothers' keepers. Pastor Lee noted that as church members visited one another they provided one another much-needed company and, equally important, challenged one another to live a virtuous life worthy of God's children.

Brian agreed with Pastor Lee's view but also thought that although church members' physical presence was invaluable in difficult times which could not be managed by his flat mates, sociality and sharing of accommodation was not supposed to be confined to fellow church members. Brian's conditionalities for visiting and not visiting are what informed the ambivalence of his social boundaries. He was neither for nor against spending time with both church mates and non-church mates. What defined moments of being together was the context in which it occurred and what informed it. His view departs from a zero-sum view of people who do not attend FIFMI as he simultaneously opened and closed his boundaries to them in the same way he did church mates.

This approach to social relations echoes Gluckman's (1958) analysis of social situations between diverse ethnic and racial groups when they come together to address matters of common interest. Such events, argues Gluckman, are punctuated by spontaneous manifestations of conflict and cooperation. The paradox of living with 'strangers' is that one has to be "open, but sometimes closed" (Wessendorf 2014, p.392). By this statement, anthropologist Susan Wessendorf meant that social relations in contexts of ethno-religious diversity involved engagement in certain aspects of their lives while simultaneously avoiding deeper contact. This "civility towards diversity" (Lofland 1989, p.464), in Wessendorf's view, "facilitates the negotiation of both positive relations and possible tensions" (Wessendorf 2014, p.392). In Brian and Sylvia's case, sociality and sharing accommodation promoted the opening of social boundaries while, at the same

time, 'difficult times' entailed that boundaries be closed to non-church members and become a concern of fellow church members.

Brian related a number of incidences when church members shared apartments and they ended up souring relations. Such cases taught Brian and Sylvia a lesson that it is better to share an apartment with a stranger than keep it as 'a Zimbabwean affair'. When things did not work out well the impact would be worse than when one was sharing with someone who is not known by church members. He thought it was even better if he was not the lease holder. In that case, if irreconcilable differences arose during the course of his stay with a non-church mate then he would just move out without following any bureaucratic process. Here Brian seemed to be celebrating the flexibility of relations with non-church members that allowed him to be open to difference and diversity, but also to be able to terminate relations without much hustles. Bauman (2001) discusses similar concerns about the dangers and opportunities of belonging in a 'community'. He notes that while community promises security, it seems to deprive us of freedom, of the right to be ourselves. For Bauman (2001), security and freedom are two equally precious and coveted values which could be balanced to some degree, but hardly ever fully reconciled. The tension between security and freedom, and between community and individuality, Bauman argues, is unlikely ever to be resolved. However, we can take stock of the dangers and the opportunities and at least try to avoid repeating past errors. Thus Brian tried to enjoy the security of being a member of FIFMI while, to some extent, retaining individual freedom through avoiding sharing accommodation with church mates.

Simmel has used the metaphor of a door to articulate that people can be open to strangers but also close their doors when they feel it is necessary to do so. In any case, the essence of having a door, in the literal sense, is so that you can be able to determine when to open it and when to close it as the situations dictate (Marotta 2008). Rather than define Brian and Sylvia's openness to sharing apartments with non-church members as a form of bridging or bonding social relations (Harper 2001), I suggest that it encapsulated both processes, enacting them at different moments and contexts. For this reason, I argue for thinking of these social relations as hyphenated relations, some kind of a bridge-bond. This, to some extent, also applied to Brian and Sylvia's social boundaries with fellow

church members, which were neither always open nor closed, but were also practiced in context.

That Brian and Sylvia preferred sharing an apartment with non-church members did not necessarily mean they did not disagree with their co-tenants on religious and moral values. Brian noted that although the two men who occupied the two bedrooms in his apartment were not troublesome to the extent of warranting ringing alarm bells, they had their own weaknesses. However, he regarded them as manageable, and he often ignored the weaknesses as he appreciated the positive aspects of living together in the context of religious diversity (Werbner 2013). Similarly, Baumann (1996) sheds light on the contradictory discourses of belonging and multiple boundaries that people negotiate in everyday life. Brian could not imagine himself failing to live well with a person just because they drank beer (see Chapter Six where I discuss everyday relations between Brian, Sylvia and their co-tenants).

Zakeo: Rethinking ethnic enclaves

I introduced Zakeo in Chapter Three as one of the first members to attend FIFMI Salt River Assembly. Unlike most of the congregants who participated in this study, Zakeo neither used the internet nor church-based social networks to look for accommodation. Rather, as I discuss below, he used personal networks of co-tenants, who usually were not members of his church, to secure rooms in apartments whose leaseholders he was familiar with. By ‘chance’, Zakeo regularly found himself sharing accommodation with migrants from Malawi. Unlike Baluleke who ironically preferred sharing an apartment with tenants from church, Zakeo was less interested in the religious affiliation of the co-tenant than he was with whether or not that tenant was “generally a good person to live with.” It is because of this that he could share a house with a traditional healer, “non-religious” tenants from the DRC, and still accept an invitation to live with a lessee from Malawi who did not attend FIFMI. Zakeo acknowledged that not using church social media contradicted and undermined the effort made by fellow church members, but was quick to point out that he did not do it deliberately. To date, Zakeo’s experience has shared apartments and houses with a South African landlady, leaseholders from the Democratic

Republic of Congo (DRC) and Malawi, all of whom were not members of FIFMI. At least in the context of accommodation, his experience departed from the ethnic enclave hypothesis whose argument is that migrants from the same country and ethnic group cluster in the same residential area. This, however, did not mean that Zakeo and other church members did not reproduce ethnic enclaves through, for example, their choices of churches to attend.

While Zakeo and his wife had never shared an apartment with fellow church members and preferred landlords who were not of Zimbabwean origin, they were also ambivalent about co-residing with certain nationalities, especially from the DRC. One day I visited Zakeo and his wife in Wynberg where they rented a room in a four-bedroom house. While I was chatting with Zakeo and his wife in his room, one of his fellow tenants knocked on the door. Zakeo opened the door and they started conversing in English. I could tell that the man's accent was neither Zimbabwean nor South African. When the conversation was over I asked Zakeo about the tenants he shared the house with. He told me the man was from Malawi, after which I joked with him about the coincidence of sharing with Malawians. Zakeo then told me that what happened was that before they came to stay in Wynberg they were staying somewhere not far from their current place. The lease was under a certain man from the DRC. What usually happened was that when a person secured a housing lease, he would use one or two rooms and sublet the remaining rooms to other tenants. The lessee would then charge exorbitant rentals to the other tenants to the extent that he ended up paying way below the market rates. Say, for instance, the house had four-bedrooms and the owner charged R6 000.00 for the whole house, the lessee could get three tenants to occupy three bedrooms and charge R2 500.00 per room. He became the landlord and sometimes ended up staying in the house free of charge.

Zakeo noted that although migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo were generally nice people, they were also generally not easy to share an apartment with, especially when they were the lease holders. Their 'nice' side was that once you had signed the contract you could live as long as you wished and that if you were a fan of rhumba you could enjoy unlimited access to that musical genre. Most of the Congolese leaseholders Zakeo shared apartments with would play music at very high volume but

would lower it if requested to do so. Although he personally preferred Christian gospel music, Zakeo did not fuss much about rhumba since it was also popular in Zimbabwe. He also acknowledged that even other tenants from Malawi he had lived with at the Congolese houses and or apartments enjoyed rhumba.

At the same time, Zakeo and a number of people he knew personally had complained about Congolese's many rules, unnecessary supervision and needless complaints. Herein lay, at a small scale, the messiness of social relations analogous to the 'contaminated diversity' that anthropologist Anna Tsing (2012) sees in the era of the Anthropocene. Such diversity, which is a collaborative adaptation to human-disturbed ecosystems, "emerges as the detritus of environmental destruction, imperial conquest, profit making, racism, and authoritarian rule – as well as creative becoming" (Tsing 2012, p.95). As Tsing notes, contaminated diversity is not always pretty. But it is who we are and what we have as available working partners for a liveable earth. For Zakeo, the Congolese were a mishmash of good and bad character. "They can just come and knock on your door and say, 'Come here, *chii chii chii* (what what what).' Ah! I had problems with that". Most of the Congolese he shared apartments with did not have formal jobs, although some worked mainly as security guards. "I do not even know how they manage to secure those leases because property owners normally ask for pay slips from prospective lessees, which they do not have. But they still get the leases. Maybe they know how to negotiate", remarked Zakeo. It was because they did not have a stable source of income and mainly engaged in informal business that they employed 'insincere tactics' to elude paying for accommodation, the kind of behaviour that Zakeo did not appreciate.

For Zakeo and family, relocations were spontaneous – in the sense of not being systematically organised around fellow church members – and they came with their own ambivalences regarding perceptions on certain moral behaviours of non-church member tenants. I discussed above the Balulekes' struggle to get an apartment after a prospective landlord had changed his mind. This was not always the case for some congregants as, on account of 'good behavior', as Zakeo put it, they got snatched from their current places of residence by new leaseholders. This usually worked to the advantage of the

congregant since they would be better positioned to negotiate favourable terms and conditions of residence in keeping with their social and religious values and belief systems. This was illustrated at the Congolese's house that Zakeo previously shared with three tenants from Malawi who slept in a single bedroom. One of these Malawian guys then secured a lease for the Wynberg house where Zakeo and wife were currently staying. He then came to Zakeo and said, "*Imimi ndakufarirai* (I have liked you), you are good people. If it's fine with you, you can come and stay with me at my new place.' That is how I came here. Generally, people from Malawi are very nice".

Although Zakeo had never shared accommodation with fellow church members, he thought that they would not create the same problems had he lived with them. His comments, while they were made during a discussion about his relations with the Malawian landlords, were more general than specifically referring to the Malawians. He believed that "*vanhu vemunyika havana chavononyanya kutya* (people of the world do not fear anything), so sometimes they just do what pleases them with impunity without regarding how you feel about it." Zakeo noted that some took advantage of the fact that you are a Christian and you are most likely to do nothing in response to their undesirable behaviour. This partly accounted for why Zakeo and other congregants would be seen as good tenants by their landlords even to the extent of some 'landladies' asking the former to find them boyfriends from the congregants' church (see Chapter Three). In this regard, non-church member landlords were treated more cautiously than would have church members despite the former still being preferred over the latter.

However, Zakeo defined his everyday social relations in a more positive than negative light. In Wynberg, Zakeo and his wife shared the house with Malawians and other Zimbabweans. There was a room shared by three young men from Zimbabwe. Joseph, the lessee from Malawi, lived with his wife in another room. Under the lease arrangement, the lessee was the one who used the lounge. Other tenants could use the kitchen. However, Joseph said all the tenants could use the lounge at any time, something that was not permitted at the Congolese man's place. According to Zakeo, what you used or did not use depended on how flexible and accommodative the lessee was. He said, "Here we live a very flexible life. Nobody monitors you unnecessarily and asks you silly

questions like *ko ndiani atsika apa, ko wazoita sei futi chii chii chii* (who stepped here, what have you done again?). We just accept each other's values". Using insights from Alfred Schutz (1972), Werbner (2013) believes that everyday relationships flow smoothly and naturally, in an unreflexive, taken-for-granted way, to constitute shared positive identities. Such 'surface civility' (Werbner 2013) may be disrupted by "deconstructive analyses that probe beneath the surface of the everyday" to unearth the existence of negative identities, subject to discrimination and stigmatisation. Zakeo and his co-tenants gave their 'domains of commonalities' (Nina Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2015) a chance as a way to promote positive social relations. We see this in the case of Zakeo and his co-tenants who avoided making church affiliation the key variable determining their everyday relations.

Bernard: The tight-knit family?

Like the other migrant congregants whose experiences I shared in this chapter, Bernard's experience of looking for accommodation was riddled with ambivalences. He described the church as a family in the sense of a tight-knit institution. He seemed to cherish that idea and believed it was one of the reasons FIFMI was growing in Cape Town. He used the way he related with and prepared food collectively with his flat mates in Mowbray where he was staying as an example of good relations with fellow church mates and other flat mates who did not attend the same church. Bernard also used his experience of living with some church leaders to demonstrate Christian love and the impact it had on church growth. Despite his kind words for the family, and analogous to Simmel's view that 'sociation' always involves attraction and repulsion, Bernard was no longer interested in sharing apartments with fellow church members. He did not appreciate the way they changed their behaviour when they were at home. Regarding this behavior, he had this to say:

... The personality that people exhibit in church is not the same personality they have when they are at home. That is when the problem comes. Plus, some people want to treat you the way they treat their children because they will be calling you my son. I once stayed with some church elder but

ended up running away because of that behaviour. I was paying rent but I still lacked the freedom to have my own private life.

This belief that people's personality fluctuates in different settings has been presented in other seminal works, such as Goffman's (1959) book "Presentation of self in everyday life". I find Goffman's analysis to resonate with what Bernard experienced during his stay with fellow church members. In view of this, I argue for understanding the behind-the-church realities of the congregants. Such realities are often more influential than the sometimes 'back-stage' social behavior of the congregants in mediating everyday social relations beyond church meetings and services. Bernard's experience also gives credence to Bauman's (2001) belief that there is tension between security and freedom. For Bernard, the church provided a 'family' but it took away individual freedom.

However, even after moving from Mowbray where he lived with both church mates and non-church mates, he invited his friend and church mate, Shepard, to live with him. Bernard however justified his decision to take in Shepard on the basis that he had been experiencing burglaries. As I present briefly above, Bernard's circumstance for relocating from Mowbray was a constellation of factors: financial considerations, and the need to wean himself financially from his biological brother. There were other factors, presented below, that motivated him to relocate, factors that contradicted his aspirations for church members to live together and share resources as a 'family'. These included the desire to maintain good relations with fellow church members and the physical proximity of a selected apartment to his workplace.

Even though Bernard, who is a shuttle driver, aspired to live a middle class lifestyle, his circumstances forced him to move out of the predominantly middle class neighbourhood of Mowbray to one he had always despised and dreaded due to its crime rates. By moving out, Bernard did not only contradict his ambition regarding residential location, but he also moved away from fellow church mates he both cherished for their company and condemned for their manipulative tendencies.

One day I visited Bernard at his flat in Mowbray. We chatted for about two hours after which he received a call from a certain Zimbabwean man. They seemed to be discussing

business. As soon as he ended the call he requested me to accompany him to a township called Dunoon to meet the man. As we were driving, Bernard talked at length about how he did not appreciate the ghetto culture of selling food alongside a running sewerage, the reckless tendency to park cars everywhere, including on the roadside, teenage girls' lack of value for their body that allowed them to walk half naked early in the morning, and some residence's disregard for life to the extent of killing someone for a few rands. Bernard informed me that it was because of all these conditions of living that he would sacrifice the few rands he had to live in a relatively expensive apartment.

While we were driving back from Dunoon we passed a residential area where Bernard was planning to relocate the following week. He said, "You see this turn-off, that's where I will be staying. The area is a mix of coloured and black people. I managed to secure accommodation here and I have paid deposit." Ironically, the neighbourhood Bernard was talking about is Philippi, a low-income settlement on the Cape Flats with fairly similar living conditions as Dunoon. Since I did not know much about the place then, I only inferred from Bernard's description of the place, especially its location close to the Century City Shopping Mall, that perhaps the area was fairly affluent. Although the neighbourhood is strategically located in close proximity to economic opportunities and transport nodes, it faces serious development challenges in the form of overcrowding, poverty, unemployment, and crime¹². It was only after a bit of research that I got to know about Philippi and Bernard's ironic vow that he would not live in a ghetto. Bernard's story illustrates how people may not want to cross certain physical and social boundaries only to cross them.

Bernard was of the view that physically moving from fellow church members was a way of getting closer to them socially. Thus, once he had established his fit through being accommodated by church members, he believed it was not the best decision to continue staying with them. Although adaptation in order to access accommodation may entail the use of social networks, once some of the congregants had found their feet they often preferred to be independent of these 'social debts' (see Muir & Weinstein 1962).

¹² 12 See <https://alcoholsouthafrica.wordpress.com/leave-feedback/philippi/>

Paradoxically, they did this by moving away from the close networks that facilitated their initial settling in, regardless of whether were church based networks or any other networks. This assumption created ambivalences about what made social relations strong, staying physically close or maintaining distance while communicating irregularly.

Here we note that Bernard's notion of 'church as family' did not always translate into a cohesive unit even when members shared accommodation. Rather, it pointed to the messiness of family dynamics where some family members did not appreciate the ways in which the path of the family vis-à-vis unity, everyday conduct and simple issues such as tidying up a room, were defined by other elderly family members. Such dynamics have been theorised by psychiatrist Laing (1961; 1971) in his analysis of family relations. For Laing, some family members strive to achieve a 'family reality' by defining goals and needs of other family members, to the point of invalidating their negative perceptions of the family and repressing protests and dissent. Through this approach, especially by parents, to present the family as wholly good and essential, and the outside world as hostile and dangerous, parental love becomes warm and protective but also suffocating and destructive (Laing 1971). In a similar vein, Bernard appreciated the sharing, and unity that characterised both the church and the attempts by church leaders he lived with at different stages to create a semblance of a family. At the same time, he decried the 'manipulation' ("when you are a good person church people like to take advantage of you") and the strict monitoring that marked his stay with Pastor Divine and Elder Moto. As evidence that no boundary is unconditional (Simmel 1971), Bernard still portrayed the church and the sharing of apartments with church mates using the metaphor of 'family', even though he has opted to live with non-church members.

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter for understanding the messiness and contradictions that underlay how FIFMI congregants looked for accommodation and the implications this had for defining social relations between diverse social actors. I highlighted that individual congregants' processes of looking for apartments did not always conform to a clearly defined pattern. Rather, a multiplicity of factors came into play to defy organised

approaches based on church networks. Such factors, grounded in the agency of individual congregants, informed the ambivalences guiding the process. I also demonstrated that while in theory, church based social media groups helped congregants who needed accommodation, in practice congregants relied on anything from estate agents, to public notices, to online advertisements and word-of-mouth outside the church.

In view of this, I suggest that it is not always the case that everyone preferred sharing accommodation with fellow church members. The subsequent disharmony that followed from congregants' seemingly deliberate decision to share apartments with tenants who did not attend FIFMI was ambivalent given the potential ideological and moral divergences that followed from this 'contaminated co-residence'. At the same time, when congregants relocated from fellow congregants' apartments and secured lease agreements, they sometimes invited fellow congregants to occupy extra rooms. In addition, I have shown that in desperate times, individual congregants often made impromptu decisions. This was regardless of whether they were the ones who were looking for accommodation, or they had lease agreements and were looking for tenants to occupy extra rooms in their apartment. Such unforeseen circumstances often forced them to share the apartment with people they were not prepared to live with. But desperation also came when individual congregants had friends, relatives and other church members who could assist them to look for an apartment but deliberately chose not to take that option. This was a self-imposed desperation that contradicted the congregants' talk about church-as-community. As the evidence presented in this chapter indicates, congregants also moved from one residential location to another as need dictated. In the process, they shared accommodation with Nigerians, Malawians, South Africans, and Ugandans. The kinds of relations that resulted from this movement and situational and contingent-based pairing were not uniform.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EVERYDAY ‘CONVIVIALITY’ AND CONFLICT BETWEEN CO-TENANTS

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on mundane conflicts and conviviality in relation to the church’s view on these issues. What are some of the things that spark conflict between individual congregants and their co-tenants in shared apartments? How do the church’s ideologies and practices inform the ways in which the congregants respond to conflict over payments of bills, the untidiness of co-tenants, and conflicting social and religious identities? The chapter also develops the notion of ‘yoking’ from a different angle, not necessarily in terms of definitions of love for prospective converts (see Chapter Three). Rather, this yoking is in relation to the physical spaces and material resources they are compelled to share by virtue of being co-tenants. This include sharing the use of cooking stoves, bathrooms, paying electricity bills, joining each other in the sitting room or watching television programmes together. For instance, in this chapter I ask the following question: What do individual members’ reservations about uncleanness (in the bathroom) tell us about FIFMI’s view on the body? Is it about cleanliness being next to Godliness? Is it an outward sign of your inward state? What is the church’s view on sexual immorality vis-à-vis spirituality and the body? Maxwell (2005, p.24) has argued that Pentecostalism is “a quintessential religion of the body”. The body is used for preaching, singing, praying, and deliverance through the laying on of hands, hugging fellow believers, and greeting and smiling at newcomers.

This section was not just about the ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ behaviour that occurs when people live together. When I presented my idea for this chapter to a colleague, he looked at me and said, “I honestly think that there is nothing worth researching here. It seems you are just talking about what a normal family would do when they live together; they fight, laugh and do all sorts of things”. This frank review of my initial idea helped me to rethink and rearticulate the idea I wanted to put across. While the notions of normalcy and ordinariness are part of the main idea, there is more to it than just that. The background to the argument I attempt to put across stems from the Geertzian and

Weberian definition of religion as “a set of symbols and codes that *shape interactions* and provide meaning to events in the world around us” (Landau 2009, p.198, my own emphasis). I suggest that when people who are governed by such symbols, belief systems and codes encounter social actors from different religious and non-religious backgrounds, these values are put to test in complex ways. Such practices motivate responses that range from ambivalence, to compromise, to indifference, depending on how socially diverse co-tenants place such symbols and codes in their social practice.

The contradictions of eating together

Much of the discussion in this chapter is a presentation and analysis of how co-tenantship between locals and migrants provides a platform to understand the contradictions of social interaction and belonging ‘from below’ (Alexander et al. 2007). This is belonging exercised between migrants and local groups with limited state support in the form of policies and resources, both material and non-material. Such forms of belonging rely on the support from both the local groups and migrants as they share social and physical spaces. When exercised by co-tenants from diverse religious and non-religious ethno-national backgrounds, such forms of belonging are fraught with compromises and contradictions. Some of the contradictions pertain to choices about eating together between co-tenants, including what is eaten based on certain religious principles. I use the case of Brian and Sylvia to demonstrate how these ambivalences unfold.

One month-end of 2015 I visited Brian and Sylvia after church. We drove to their apartment in Rondebosch, one of Cape Town’s neighbourhoods from which FIFMI congregants come. Brian and Sylvia share a three-bedroom apartment with Mpho, who is South African, and Sam, from Uganda. Neither are married. As soon as we arrived at the apartment, a certain man unlocked the main door holding a plastic bag in his right hand. He greeted us in English, before Brian made brief introductions, jovially jibing Mpho. “This is Mpho, we share this apartment. He is one of two guys we stay with here. If one day you come here and find me dead he will be suspect number one. He has been admiring my wife for a long time. You see all this food he always brings us, it is a strategy to entice my wife”, remarked Brian. To which Mpho replied, “Don’t mind him (Brian). He

is jealous. He will not even allow any guy to greet his wife. To him all guys look suspicious". We all burst into laughter. Brian replied, "Maybe you should marry and stop giving me a nightmare. As I always assure you, I will be glad to find you a Zimbabwean girl who suits your spending habits". "You got me there! I am still afraid of committing myself to a relationship. I don't think marriage is an easy walk in the park". Mpho then placed the plastic bag on the table in the sitting room, which also doubles as the dining room, and made a few signals to Brian before proceeding to one of the rooms in the apartment. Sylvia, who was in the kitchen when Mpho arrived, joined us for an afternoon chat as she waited for the food she was preparing to be ready.

Sylvia took Mpho's plastic bag to the kitchen and came back holding a tray with three portions of food for myself, Brian and Mpho. After the meal Mpho stayed with us in the sitting room for thirty more minutes before making his way into his bedroom. Brian and I continued the conversation we had started about his relationship with Mpho and the other flat mate, Sam, from Uganda. What fascinated me was the easiness with which their conversation seemed to unfold, the no-holds barred jokes they made about each other, and their quotidian approach to sharing food. While Brian and Sylvia are glad to share a meal with Mpho, for religious reasons, Sylvia appreciates it if he does not drink beer in the dining room. She is very particular about the biblical prohibitions on certain foods and drinks. In addition, Sylvia has her own personal dislike of the smell of beer which adds to why she discourages Mpho from drinking beer in the dining room. Thus when Mpho left the food in the dining room, he proceeded to his bedroom with a plastic bag of a few bottles of beer. He only came back about 30 minutes later with an empty can of beer which he quickly threw in the bin before joining us on the table for the meal. Brian does not fuss about this strict observance of church doctrines, which he thinks sometimes detract from accommodating people with different religious views. He has even discussed this with Sylvia in order to convince her that it is not always necessary to be rigid about church beliefs and doctrines.

Although they cooked separately, they used the same kitchen. As Brian noted, "Budgeting is not easy when you are not married and have no one to monitor your spending habits. So their food reserves get exhausted before month end and they come to us for

assistance". Sometimes they borrowed money, say R200 or so, and sometimes it was just the little things such as a small pocket of salt or sugar. There were cases when their financial condition got worse, especially for Mpho, when all his food reserves dried up days before pay day. When that happened, Brian and Sylvia usually invited him for dinner when he came back from work. Sometimes it was not even about them having no food, for Brian related how he just enjoyed sharing what he and Sylvia had. He even joked with Mpho about how being bankrupt made him more friendly. When he was broke he would leave the comfort of his bedroom to spend time in the sitting room with his co-tenants.

To reciprocate the gesture, Mpho always remembered on month-ends to visit a fast-food outlet to buy Brian and Sylvia a sumptuous meal. Although Brian and Sylvia did not expect him to repay them the food they gave him when he needed it, they had built a tacit 'family' tradition. As part of the tradition, Brian and Sylvia took care of Mpho's and Sam's (the flat mate from Uganda) needs throughout the month. Their unwritten expectation was to spoil the former once or twice on month-ends.

Although eating meals together is nothing new, the 'communal' setting that punctuates such eating is important for understanding the social boundaries, intimacy and affect of the consumers. Individuals come together in diverse contexts to eat meals together, such as parks, cafeterias, and food courts. However, as Dunlap (2009) notes, such haphazard gatherings would not constitute 'authentic communities' within many contexts (see also Alexander et al. 2007). Authentic communities are marked by the mutual obligations among participants. This mutuality is contrasted to the 'mindless consumption' of calories and an obligation not to bother others that characterises the contexts of cafeterias, and food courts. Similar to Dunlap's observation about family dinners at a communal farm, the degree of intentionality and a sense of obligation that marked the gatherings of Brian and Sylvia and their tenants is often missing in other meal contexts. For Dunlap's eating together at the Farm, "the localized discourse surrounding Family Dinner involves statements about welcoming participants, valuing locally produced food, the importance of 'conviviality', and the enduring nature of community" (Dunlap 2009, p.431). Such gatherings, I suggest, constitute a community in real time, one that does not always exist in the idealised notion of church-as-community, especially given that congregants often

live miles away from one another and do not share meals and other material resources on a daily basis. Communities based on sharing between tenants fit the description of personal communities articulated by Alexander et al (2007) in their study of language, ethnicity and citizenship in Britain (see Chapter Four).

Even though the relationships between Brian and Sylvia and their co-tenants transcended ethnic and religious lines through the banal sharing of food, they often evoked religious beliefs by suggesting what should be brought to the dining table and what should not. In this way, they demonstrate the re-negotiation of social and religious identities and discourses in uncertain ways. In addition to the economic and material aspects of food production, eating is believed to have political, social, religious, and cultural implications (Dunlap 2009). In the postmodern era, choices about eating also entail negotiating many discourses related to religion, health, culture, and body image (Dunlap 2009). As Dunlap (2009, p.431) argues, "What one eats, how one eats it, and with whom one eats it have important implications for individuals' identities". For Brian and Sylvia and their co-tenants, this process often involved compromises and contradictions, as when Brian accepted some of their co-tenants' tastes – drinking beer – as part of coexistence, while his wife gradually, but grudgingly, contended with the smell of beer. To some extent, such compromises reflected their agency with regards to approaches to church ideologies and their application to everyday social relations in the context of social diversity. According to Brian, ideologies about what to eat and what not to eat should not be taken as a given. Rather, people should consider cases where they may be inimical to co-residence.

Here I also argue that while individual congregants valued the church and its ideologies, they also situated it within the context of the situational realities and impromptu priorities of living together. It is these situational realities that often informed the contradictions referred to above. As Ramey (2007) argues, when people live together as a community, they focus their emphasis on certain practices while neglecting or downplaying others (see Chapter One). Ramey sees this as a way to negotiate between different interests and needs of individuals, as well as the opportunities and limitations posed by the wider political, social, religious, and economic contexts. In other words, in everyday life, religious or church ideologies, symbols, and codes are situated within the context of other

economic, social and political ideologies, symbols, and codes, which also determine human action. This is what Nancy Ammerman (2014, p.195) implies when she argues that everyday life is largely mundane and secular. Ammerman believes that if, for scholars of religious studies,

. . . finding religion requires finding places where there is *only* religion, then there is little for us to do. Just as Mary Douglas (1993) reminded us that the medieval world was no 'golden age' in which everyone lived under a religious 'canopy', so today's daily round of activities is shaped by rather ordinary concerns (Ammerman 2014, p.195).

For Brian and Sylvia, one of the contributing factors to the contradictions of social boundaries was not just sharing an apartment with ethno-religiously diverse tenants. Rather, it is sharing that apartment with someone for a long period of time "such that you end up knowing each other in and out". Depending on one's views on Christian principles, co-residence was sometimes seen as more important than a stringent adherence to certain church ideologies. Thus, Brian admitted that when they started living together, creating convivial relations with Mpho and Sam was not easy because they did not know the kinds of people they were living with. Each tenant would mind their own business. They would chat with one another, but not much. The fact that they did not share the same religious belief systems also contributed to their initially cautious conversations. Both Mpho and Sam were not born again. However, as they became more familiar with one another, Brian and Sylvia paid less attention to their religious differences as they 'broke church rules' to accommodate one another's interests. Being non-Christians, everyday fellowship with them (Mpho and Brian) was the initial step towards many more contradictions that would follow their experiences. I discussed in Chapter Three how church growth through evangelism entailed contradictions of simultaneously saving and avoiding the world (Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001). Such contradictions, I suggest, become more pronounced when the world and Christians live together on a daily basis.

Mpho and Sam also felt comfortable discussing their private life with Brian and Sylvia, such as stories about the immediate family, marriage, and problems at work. In turn, Brian

and Sylvia shared their private life with the Sam and Mpho, albeit sparingly, given the latter's age and (non)religious affiliation. This all started with the effort every one of them put to make the relationship work. For instance, Brian talked about how Mpho used to struggle to propose love to girls. He related that unlike Sam, who had multiple sexual partners, for the full year that Brian and Sylvia had been living with Mpho, they had not seen him with a girlfriend. This, Brian observes, was very unlike what he heard about South African men, especially those who do not attend any organised religious organisation. Sylvia even joked about her plans to find him a Zimbabwean wife.

Brian related how he and Sylvia worked to retain a convivial social environment by engaging with the interests of their co-tenants. For instance, since they knew that Sam liked politics, especially current affairs, they always invited him when they were watching documentaries on Uganda and neighbouring countries. Brian remembered one day when they were watching *The Last King of Scotland*¹³ and his wife invited Sam as a 'guest analyst'. Even though they had seen the movie before, they decided to buy it for Sam's sake. As Brian recalled, "That day he took us through the whole history of Uganda, from Idi Amin's dictatorship, to the assassination of perceived opponents to the current leadership of Yoweri Museveni. It was as if we were in a lecture room".

To sustain this everyday 'conviviality' and minimize social tension, Brian and Sylvia also made an effort to learn the weaknesses of their co-tenants. For example, Brian related that Sam, who works for an events organising and food catering company, was not one of the most generous people. As Brian noted, Sam just finds it hard to share resources. He usually thought twice or thrice before he gave somebody anything. "Once his friends complained that he is very economical with resources to the extent that he even starves himself. Of course, they were exaggerating the degree of his meanness. But of late he has worked on that really hard", Brian commented. However, he added that when you have benefitted a lot from others you are challenged to appreciate other people's effort. Also, because he is fond of his culinary profession, he sometimes brings different food

¹³ The Last King of Scotland is a movie produced in 2006 and is based on the events of the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin's regime as seen by his personal physician during the 1970s.

samples just to show the new recipes he will be experimenting on at work”, observed Brian.

Here I point out that eating and the knowledge of food practices confer social status to individuals and groups. In Sam’s case, it was this desire for social status which motivated him to share his food, and this against his other character of being ungenerous. As Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of high art (music, and painting) and mass culture, such as food consumption, shows, such domains involve a great deal of status symbolism. Bourdieu believes that food consumption is partially a process of signification in which individuals exhibit cultural knowledge. An individual's ability to decode and consume is affected by that person's education related to the code under scrutiny (Dunlap 2009). This education for consumption is, for Bourdieu, the accumulation of cultural capital. "Thus, while food preferences are seemingly democratized and innocuous, knowledge related to food cultivation and consumption is undoubtedly a form of cultural capital" (Dunlap 2009, p.430). Conceiving of food consumption knowledge in this way, I suggest that Sam's knowledge of certain recipes was an invaluable status symbol. Thus, while Brian and Sylvia prided themselves in helping their co-tenants and in inverting the general belief that migrants live a precarious life (Williams 2015), the co-tenants had their own ways of redeeming their status. This happened through showcasing their knowledge of certain issues, such as cooking. In the case of Sam, this cultural capital was critical in that it motivated him to share food with his co-tenants, something he found difficult to do. Again, eating together was more than a ‘mindless consumption’ of calories but had other meanings attached to it. Sam's cultural capital created tension between remaining mean with food and opening up to co-tenants as a way to brag about his cooking abilities. In the end, Sam's knowledge of cooking was important for transcending social and religious divides between himself and the other tenants.

On daily cleanliness

In this section I discuss the politics of cleanliness between morally conflicting co-tenants, demonstrated by Bernard’s experience when he shared accommodation with Nigerian and South African tenants. Although Bernard noted that Francis, one of the co-tenants,

was a ‘scammer, a thief’, and, like the other flat mates, ‘untidy’, he was very knowledgeable in the word of God. Despite Francis’ shortcomings, Bernard believed that “a thief cannot be chased away just because he is a thief”. Yet, and unlike Bernard’s co-tenants, his Nigerian landlord was, as Bernard put it, “unprecedentedly nice”.

One day I asked Bernard if he had ever shared the same house with South African tenants, to which he responded,

Well, I have not shared with South African tenants but I once shared with Nigerians when I was staying in Sandrift. Yho! It was an experience (laughing). I was the only Zimbabwean in that four-bedroom house. The set-up of the house was in such a way that we had to share the kitchen. Those guys live in their own world. They eat anything and they are loud, most of them are so outspoken. They always want to take advantage of anything, whether it is buying electricity or cleaning the bathroom. That’s the boring part of it.

Bernard and his co-tenants used to have a problem when it came to cleaning the house and the payment of electricity bills. They would come up with a duty roster for cleaning the bathroom. When it was his co-tenants’ turn to clean they would not clean. One of them (Nigerians) was a woman. The other woman, who was South African, lived in the cottage behind the main house. “The kitchen was always very dirty. Imagine a kitchen being that dirty when there is a lady!” Bernard lamented. For Bernard, the ‘normal’ set-up he grew up in in Zimbabwe was that if you were renting an apartment and one of the tenants was a woman, she would be asked not to buy toiletries for the bathroom. In return, that woman would then clean the bathroom on behalf of all the tenants. “But then in the case I am describing it didn’t work like that because that lady would never clean the bathroom. In fact, I would even clean better than she used to”. Bernard’s experience of working for fast-food restaurants, where employees were encouraged to be smart at all times, also contributed to his distaste of untidiness.

FIFMI/ZAOGA teachings, through women’s organisations such as Gracious Woman, portray housekeeping as the province of women, who are expected to keep their homes

clean in every aspect (Mate 2002). Everything about the body should be kept clean. This includes what you eat, where you sleep, and how you dress. Preaching in February 2016, on the topic *Control your Mind*, Ezekiel Guti stated the following about living in a clean house and what it meant for self-worth:

I have learnt that when a black man in Africa takes over a hotel from the white man, the standards begin to go down. You would see dirt all over. My question is why? In our church, we believe in raising the standards of the people. If you are a child of God, you must be clean, first in your home, where you sleep (FIFMI 2010).

Women are encouraged to use even scarce resources to prepare tantalising meals. The belief is that a good wife should know how to cook and clean. As presented by Mate (2002), deportment has a biblical foundation and is done to testify of the goodness of God. Gracious Woman's teachings highlight that men want their wives to look good, know how to dress for specific occasions and to remain beautiful. This does not necessarily entail having expensive clothes. These views are shared by other Zimbabwean Pentecostal churches. For example, Dr Wutawunashe implores Family of God (FOG) women not to feel ashamed of dressing beautifully because it is a way of showing the glory of God. Women are encouraged to use expensive perfume, depending on their earnings. They must not smell of body odour. Women should also wear jewelry commensurate with what they can afford (Mate 2002).

In order to minimise social tensions at home, Bernard would eat at work and not frequent the kitchen, only going there to fetch water. While research has shown that migration experiences transform migrants' world views (Vertovec 2004), some migrants refer to their religious and ethnic understanding of how household chores should be performed. Studies of transnational migration also demonstrate that migrants tend to combine new practices and life styles with their old social identities and lifestyles, and attempt to structure their new world in terms of the binary of 'home' and 'away' (Vertovec 2004). This dual orientation has implications for the migrant's life world, including gender roles and practices (Madianou 2012). Bernard complained about women who did not clean the bathrooms despite the expectation that 'women back home' knew this was their

responsibility. His understanding of gender roles reflects FIFMI teachings on women and cleanliness, which are steeped in patriarchal definitions of gender relations (Mate 2002). Decision-making in Zimbabwe is also typically characterised by male dominance (Montgomery et al. 2012). This limits women's autonomous decision-making regarding sexual issues, resulting in them being vulnerable to infection from sexually transmitted diseases. Because Zimbabwean men are traditionally defined as breadwinners, the migration of Zimbabwean men preserves male dominance and access to migration-related resources (Chereni 2014b). However, as Bernard's experience indicates, such doctrines are challenged by some women of certain social classes and educational backgrounds. When this happens between co-residents, it restructures the ways in which gender roles are perceived and executed.

Concerning untidiness, Baluleke talked about the problems he had with Arimando, the man from Mozambique who came in after James had left. Arimando was 'very untidy.' Baluleke pointed out that during the first days of staying with Arimando he was 'clueless about saving.' He would get into the bathroom and would insist on switching on a 200-litre geyser instead of a kettle. If he took a bath before others, he would make sure the bathtub was nearly full, such that by the time everybody else went to bath there would be no hot water. So the Balulekes ended up making sure that they bathed before him.

Tensions also arose when Arimando refused to clean the bathroom after using it, arguing that it was 'not my style' to mop the floor and that Baluleke should install a shower curtain to restrict water movement. He even threatened to move out of the apartment because of the issue. Baluleke told him that they were not going to change their principles of cleanliness just because it is not someone's style to mop the floor when they use the bathtub.

Although he did not take kindly to reprimands, Baluleke still believed that Arimando was a good person. Only when he was reprimanded did he resort to writing letters. On the whole Baluleke believed that he and Arimando had a good relationship. After the Balulekes had discussions with him, he began cleaning the bathroom. In all these sources of tension— buying and saving electricity, and cleaning the bathroom – the religious

identities of the Arimando and the Balulekes did not feature. In fact, Baluleke did not know the name of Arimando's church. What he knew was that he attended 'a certain church' in Wynberg and that the pastor was from Malawi. It would seem that the practice of religion creates contradictions for those who practice it because, while its symbols and codes critically determine everyday social interaction (Geertz 1993), it can also be conspicuous by its absence in discussions of daily challenges and in the unfolding of everyday social realities.

However, when the Balulekes were not the leaseholders, and had challenges in addressing issues that seemed not to require reference to and application of religious ideologies and principles, they would seek refuge in the power of God to influence positive change. This applied even to issues which, ordinarily, the Balulekes and other congregants did not construct as requiring the application of religious principles. For instance, a leaseholder who wanted to extort money from him through charging extra costs for signing contracts, as Banji wanted to do when the former moved in to live with him in Mowbray, was committed to God to change his heart and see the good intentions of the Balulekes. In addition, Baluleke joked that Banji used to "excel when it comes to untidiness" but since he realised the Balulekes' effort to keep the apartment clean, he called for a meeting to praise them for their effort. When Banji initiated the conversation, Baluleke took the opportunity to discuss how best they could keep the apartment clean, especially the bathroom and kitchen. Since then, Banji made an effort to clean the bathroom whenever he used it. As Baluleke noted, "What I told myself is that I will not fight him over cleaning the flat, I just put my God in front and say Holy Spirit, take the lead and transform this man for the better". For the Balulekes, religion seems to be evoked conveniently when they feel powerless to address issues which some congregants would dismiss as constituting part of everyday ordinary life. In their everyday life, religion is paradoxically both conspicuously present and absent.

Here it is also possible to think of Baluleke's relations with Banji in terms 'ordinary ethics' (Das 2012), a moment where conflict is being negotiated by means of an available vocabulary or language. Veena Das (2012) notes that anthropologists view ethics as

simply part of our life with others – it is not a domain that is set apart. In this sense, Das borrows from Michael Lambek (2010), who observes that:

human beings cannot avoid being subject to ethics, speaking and acting with ethical consequences, evaluating our actions and those of others, acknowledging and refusing acknowledgement, caring and taking care, but also being aware of our failure to do so consistently. As a species, given our consciousness, our socialization and sociality, and our use of language, we are fundamentally ethical (Lambek 2010:1, cited in Das 2012, p.133).

Baluleke noted that although his relations with Banji did not start well because of the issue of money referred to above, Banji later realised that the Balulekes were God-fearing people who simply wanted to live peacefully and take good care of the apartment. He even admitted that the apartment now looked smart and also made an effort to keep it tidy. Banji, who is a pastor in one Nigerian church in Cape Town, is also the kind of person who initiates conversations. He often invited Baluleke to the sitting room to watch football and Nigerian movies. Banji's wife passed away in February of 2015, and since then he had been staying alone. On the whole, Baluleke thought that Banji was a good guy. He was not that kind of man who would come to you and make all sorts of demands. He appreciated that most of the things he used were the Balulekes'. For example, he was free to use some of the Baluleke's kitchen utensils because they all used the same kitchen. The cooking stove was Banji's though. In terms of food everyone bought and consumed their own food. Baluleke even found it hard to pinpoint a fault in Banji.

Sexual 'immorality'

While migrant congregants like Brian, Sylvia, and Bernard were flexible in accommodating religious differences and the quotidian interweaving of the sacred with the profane in everyday life, the Balulekes (Baluleke and his wife) were somewhat stringent in their adherence to church rules. At the same time, they were not stringent enough to choose sharing accommodation with fellow church mates over those who, for instance, indulged in sexually 'immoral' behaviour. Herein lay the blurred divide between the 'saved' and the 'unsaved' (Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001).

Most of the issues the Balulekes complained about at their former apartment in Wynberg related to sexual conduct before marriage. Ironically, Zimbabwean co-tenants, though not church mates, gave them more concerns regarding sexual immorality than any other co-tenants they lived with. Sandra was one such case. She engaged in sexual intercourse with her boyfriend before marriage. “Such conduct is outside our Christian values, we are not accustomed to such a lifestyle”, remarked Mr. Baluleke. Sandra was not a member of any church. She was cohabiting with her boyfriend from Zimbabwe. Her boyfriend ended up staying with her almost every day. He would sneak in and keep a low profile as if he was not in the room. His presence entailed extra costs on electricity, but was also a violation of the contractual agreement regarding the maximum number of people who were allowed to occupy the three-bedroom apartment. While Sandra’s room was meant for a single tenant, it was now accommodating two people.

The Balulekes also stayed with James, another migrant from Zimbabwe who was not a member of FIFMI. James’ girlfriend lived with her sister in the flat just above the Balulekes. In fact, what motivated James to come and stay with Baluleke was that he wanted to be physically closer to his girlfriend. According to Baluleke, the problem is that the girlfriend ended up living with him almost every day. James would wake up and go to work and his girlfriend wanted to be there when her boyfriend was preparing to go to work. She would come early in the morning and collect keys for the room from James. So Baluleke and his wife and James discussed the security implications of the arrangement. James’ girlfriend also had young sisters who had unlimited access to the room. They would come even when James was not around. This created problems in terms of security.

As was noted earlier, ZAOGA/FIFMI members have to involve church elders before they enter into a courtship. In a practice popularly called *kugara masofa* (literally meaning to sit on the sofa), a young man who wants to propose to a ZAOGA woman has to inform an elder before he approaches the woman. The elder will then invite the two to discuss the proposal in his or her presence. However, it is believed that, in the wake of the increasing use of social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp, men are modifying the practice by giving a hint to the prospective girlfriend to assess their chances of being accepted and to avoid embarrassment. Others even propose and get accepted before

they go to *masofa*. They then organise *masofa* once their prospects have been guaranteed. The *masofa* practice is meant to provide security to the relationship as the elder who has facilitated the process is expected to pray for the couple. In addition, it is an accountability mechanism to ensure that church members do not commit sexual intercourse before marriage.

FIFMI members understand the physical body to be the temple of God (Mate 2002). The Holy Spirit resides in the body. The argument is that a believer's physical body is not his or her own; it belongs to God. Believers should yield themselves to God to be used by Him. Sexual immorality is viewed as one of the worst ways in which a believer can defile the body. Pastors and church elders emphasised this point again and again, sometimes using the case of how the founder of the church once ran away from a woman who had tried to seduce him. In 2015, the church invited a pastor from one of FIFMI assemblies in Johannesburg to preach at a youth conference. When it was time to preach, he did not start by introducing the biblical verses from which he would be preaching, as is usually the norm in the church. Instead, he narrated the story about how the founder of the church once ran away from a woman who wanted to seduce him into having sexual intercourse. The story then chronicled how throughout his life, Guti had managed to live a morally upright life, which ought to be emulated by the youths.

So powerful was the value of sexual morality that it was strongly emphasised in Guti's message in 2010 as the church celebrated its golden jubilee. The topic of self-control, specifically controlling the desires of the flesh, was understood as tantamount to living to please God, and not people. As he noted: "If you can control your flesh, the desire of the flesh, and the desire to please people, you will be blessed... If you have a desire to serve God, control your flesh.... The secret is self-control".

On his Facebook wall, Pastor Lawrence from the Salt River Assembly reiterated the need for sexual chastity. He noted that:

Our commitment to our God-ordained destiny is determined by our willingness to blatantly and sternly refuse to accommodate any kind of sin no matter how appealing it is. There are things we enjoy (temporary,

passing fleshy gratification) that we must give up for permanent spiritual blessings. We have to be willing to crucify the flesh and its desires so as to release the spirit to its destiny. You (the spirit) are destined for something great, but the body, which is the vehicle of our spirit, might actually be the greatest hindrance, and therefore it has to be constantly crucified.

As Pastor Lawrence argued, until you hate sin with great hatred, and treat it as wickedness, you will not overcome it. Pastor Lawrence used the case of biblical Joseph who refused to have sexual intercourse with Potiphar's wife despite her persistence. As he argued, "If you want to find out how someone is serious about their destiny, check how they live their lives, especially on morality". In South Africa, sexual immorality was seen as presenting a bigger challenge than in Zimbabwe. The belief was that there is a demon of sexual immorality that had strong roots in the country (Biri 2014a). While members believed they had the power to conquer it, it was better not to expose themselves to tempting situations.

What we also learn from the Balulekes' story is that while most congregants generally constructed local black South Africans as sexually loose relative to Zimbabweans, Baluleke's personal experience with his co-tenants was somewhat different. Both Sandra and James departed from the idealised moral uprightness portrayed by some Zimbabwean pastors who travel to preach in other countries (Biri 2014a). As Biri notes, transnational Pentecostal churches often attract migrants by pointing to the supposed devalued morality of the host citizens. This devaluing is tantamount to ethnic chauvinism and is contrasted to what is believed to be the moral supremacy of the migrant. There is a widespread belief that in every country there are evil territorial spirits that are particular to that country. These evil spirits need to be prayed against so that they do not affect migrants living in other countries. South Africa is allegedly 'possessed' with the spirit that promotes sexual immorality and murder, evidenced by its high murder and rape cases relative to its neighbouring countries. Mozambique is believed to be afflicted by the demon of poverty, as is evidenced by natural disasters and civil wars (Biri 2014a). These abstract generalisations are challenged at the level of the everyday, where migrants from morally 'superior' countries exhibit behaviour that is contrary to what is ideally expected of them.

Social intimacy with a traditional healer

The conspicuous presence-absence nature of religious ideologies in determining social boundaries was also demonstrated by Zakeo's experience at one of the apartments he once lived. Like Brian and Sylvia, and Bernard, Zakeo had a 'liberal approach' to relating with co-tenants who were not members of FIFMI. During one of my visits to Zakeo in Wynberg, he related his experience sharing a house with a South African landlady and two co-tenants from Malawi. Zakeo related the intimate discussions he used to have with the landlady about girlfriends and boyfriends. We discussed how, against the expectation for him to minimise socialising with his landlady, who was a traditional healer and not born again, Zakeo used his limited understanding of the landlady's language to temporarily insert himself in her social life.

Rather than try to avoid intimate relations with his 'unsaved' co-tenants, Zakeo celebrated his limited knowledge of their languages, something that brought him closer to them. In this regard, Zakeo noted that his relations with the tenants from Malawi were relatively good because "I can speak a few words in their Malawian language". He said that even local South Africans were attracted to him because he can speak one or two words in isiXhosa. So they appreciated that he made an effort to speak their language. As he said, "Even when I speak a single word they feel excited. Although I am not able to pronounce the words correctly, the fact that I have tried is enough for them to be happy. I become part of their social life". This, he continued, was unlike someone who always spoke English or told them that he or she was not able to speak their (South Africans') local languages and even requests the locals to speak English. Even at work, he continued, the way locals treat someone who only converses in English is different from the way they relate with someone who makes an effort to speak their language. "Even if you just say *Molweni!* (Hallo!), you will hear them ask, 'Yho! Who taught you that word?' They will be so excited". Unlike Zakeo, the three tenants from Malawi could not even speak a single isiXhosa word.

Here language assumed a different meaning to the way it was perceived by Brian, who, in his conversation with Mama Nogwebu, imagined that speaking in a 'fake' accent was

enough to be indexed as other (see Chapter Four). Rather than Zakeo's co-tenants vetting his pronunciation of Xhosa words as a way to determine his outsidership (Bourdieu 1991), a mere interest, as well as knowledge of a few words, was enough of an 'entry fee' (Siziba 2014) for negotiating what Pnina Werbner (2013) calls 'surface solidarity'. For Werbner (2013), surface solidarities are about "the egalitarianism and amity produced by everyday sociality whenever actors highlight a shared identity held in common that enables them to engage in positive communication and shared performance across their differences". As I pointed out in the chapter on contingent social encounters, Bourdieu (1991) argues that language is "evaluated and tested for authenticity" and that knowing how to speak a language 'properly' is more important than being able to speak it. However, Zakeo's experience demonstrated that sometimes 'original' speakers of a language may appreciate an outsider who sincerely makes an effort to speak their language, and would even work with him or her to perfect the pronunciation of certain words. In everyday convivial relations, speaking another person's language is not necessarily about negotiating insidership. Rather, it is more of exercising surface solidarity and civility towards linguistic diversity. Zakeo was aware that he did not plan to stay at the South African landlady's apartment once he got married. In addition, given the differences in religious backgrounds between him and his co-tenants and landlady, his quest for insidership was not always clearly expressed. His stay at the South African landlady was characterised by both a negotiation of affirmative outsidership ("I am a Christian and you are not") and transitory 'insidership', or surface solidarity ("While I remain in this apartment, I will speak a few Xhosa words and relate well with my co-tenants").

In keeping with this notion of 'pragmatic-being-together' (Noble 2009) which Zakeo practiced with his co-tenants, Sennett (1974, p.255) has argued that "people can act together without the compulsion to be the same." Glick Schiller, Darieva and Gruner-Domic (2011) believe that in the context of social diversity, social relations may be negotiated without the conditionalities of renouncing one's own social, political, or religious identity over another. As they note, "If cosmopolitanism is viewed as arising from social relationships that do not negate cultural, religious or gendered differences but see people as capable of relationships of experiential commonalities *despite differences*",

then researchers can move beyond the binaries of sameness vs. difference, inclusion vs. exclusion (Glick Schiller et al. 2011, p.403 my emphasis). Such an understanding of relational practices recognises “the agency of persons and small groups and the ability of mobile people politically to constitute common and sometimes fluid identities within larger collectivities” (Glick Schiller et al. 2011, p.403). Arguably, individual migrant congregants, as co-tenants, can ‘live religion’ while at the same time acknowledging the values and beliefs of those who do not attend the same organised religion as themselves. The same can also be said about local (South African) co-tenants (the case of Mpho presented above) and landladies, as well as other international migrants. Equally, Yuval-Davis (1999) speaks of transversal politics where interlocutors, conscious of their own identity, nevertheless, attempt to position themselves in the life-world of the Other.

It is also important to understand the context in which language may or may not be a necessary capital for deliberately negotiating insiderness. When migrants, for various reasons, prefer to conceal their identities in public or semi-public spaces, what Hunter (1985) calls ‘parochial spaces’, such as local institutions and associations, they may do so in order to pass the ‘authenticity test’ regarding the ‘proper’ way of speaking a certain language. This is usually the case for many illegal migrants who try to conceal their identities from law enforcement agents, violent sections of host populations, and, for migrants residing in highly xenophobic suburbs, or living with landlords whom they fear may expose their nationality. However, my study revealed that in medium and low-density neighbourhoods where most of the migrants are middleclass and have legal work and residence permits, inability to speak local languages ‘properly’ is less marked than in high-density suburbs. When Zakeo, therefore, celebrated his ability to speak isiXhosa and the Malawian language spoken by his co-tenants from Malawi, his effort was fraught with ambivalence since it entailed closing the social divide with his interlocutors while at the same time his religious ideology required that he widen this divide.

Another twist in the triad relations amongst Zakeo, the Malawian tenants and the landlady was the way the landlady, who was not ‘born again’, related with Zakeo better than she did with the Malawian tenants, who were also not born again. He noted that every day the Malawian tenants would bring home different kinds of South African ladies. They drank

beer and would sometimes have altercations with the ladies that they brought home. This angered the landlady. Although the landlady was a traditional healer ('witchdoctor') and not a Christian, she related better with a Christian tenant than with those who were not Christian. She even admired him and wished she could have a man like him. In terms of meals, while tenants tried to live independent lives by cooking in their own bedrooms, the landlady would break this unwritten rule by always asking for food from Zakeo. As Zakeo said, "If she overheard you cooking she would come and ask for a portion. Sometimes she would bring a container and ask for sugar, the following day she would request for another thing". Zakeo would never ask her for anything. This, according to Zakeo, "is where problems would arise". The landlady found it difficult to respect the social distance which Zakeo expected to be maintained. For Zakeo, lived religion entailed being civil towards the interests of his landlady and assisting her, albeit reluctantly. FIFMI leaders strongly encouraged church members to be self-reliant and to be entrepreneurial. The majority of ZAOGA members adopted this instruction and worked hard for various church projects: construction of hospitals, schools, children's villages, pastors' houses, Bible centres, sending missionaries to other countries, and paying for the running of Ezekiel TV. Guti narrated his 'burden' to build a Bible school in Harare and how colonial policies could not allow him to buy land near the city. He had to wait for ten years to get land and to start the construction of Africa Multination for Christ College (AMFCC), the church's Bible school (Guti 2011). Church members made an effort to adopt and implement Guti's decrees, which include annual declarations, passed in the form of *Tsamba yeMazuva Gumi* (The Letter of the Ten Days). This is a blueprint instruction used across all ZAOGA assemblies as they fast and pray from the first to the tenth day of January every year.

While FIFMI reiterates the need for Christians not to be yoked together with unbelievers, everyday relations do not always clearly conform to this approach. As Birgit Meyer (2012) notes with regards to Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCCs), it is impossible for born-again Christians to escape from forces grounded in and emanating from non-Christian traditions and relations. This is despite such churches' reference to cultural traditions through "diabolisation or demonisation" (Meyer 2012, p.159) and their messages that encourage their members to cut ties with non-Christian family members and other social ties (Engelke 2004; Laurent 2001; van Dijk 1992a).

The mishmash relationship

At a more personal level, one of the most complex relationships Bernard developed was with Francis, a migrant from Nigeria. This relationship, which points to the complex duality of religion as an everyday practice and a normative doctrine (Schielke & Debevec 2012), portrayed Francis' identities as being convoluted: a thief, a pure criminal, a scammer, someone who knew the biblical 'truth' and called himself a Christian but was reluctant to follow it, but also a friend who would always spoil Bernard whenever he had money. It is these blended identities that confused Bernard regarding whether to distance himself from Francis or not. In the end, he identified him as his friend "because you can't chase someone away because he is Nigerian or because he is a thief. Sometimes you bring him close". Francis was knowledgeable in the word of God, and in 'any other stuff', but would twist his interpretation to argue that the Bible was written just to make people unite. He could tell you everything about when the Bible was written, and who wrote it. Also, as a scammer, he is one of those people who call people or send them fake emails congratulating them for winning, say, a car or millions of dollars. He would then request the 'winner' to send money to facilitate the processing of the price. In his book *Two Ways of Knowing God*, Guti (2009) spoke against the use of 'natural knowledge' to find God. Natural knowledge is knowledge of God that is not based on a 'personal encounter' (Guti 2009, p.31) with God through revelation. Personal encounter could be in the form of a vision like the one Guti had in the early years of his ministry. Personal revelation meant that people would not base their religious belief on theological teachings. He used the Biblical reference of Ephesians 1: 17, which states that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him".

In this regard, Bernard believed that although Francis read the Bible in detail, he fell short of knowing and understanding the truth because of lack of personal revelation. Without this revelation, this truth remained 'hidden' even to those who read the Bible everyday. For instance, although the Jews read the Bible, they "did not understand him [Jesus]" (Guti 2009, p.31). They claimed to be sons of Abraham but explained the scriptures differently to the way Jesus' apostles did. Guti notes that theology is different from

personal revelation in that it is premised on the ‘wrong’ assumption that once you read about salvation you already have it, even if you are not saved in the sense of being baptized through immersion under water and receiving the Holy Spirit. Contrary to theological teachings, ZAOGA believes that it is not enough to have the Bible. According to Guti:

Theology tells the people that we are already saved. That is why when you ask this question “Are you saved?” One will say, “I was born in the church. I grew up in the church, what are you talking about? . . . Only mature people can see that the doctrine is wrong (Guti 2009, pp.31–32).

This theological route to salvation fell short in that it did not accord as much value to the process of repentance through the confession of sins, a process which is the mainstay of FIFMI and other Pentecostal movements.

Because of this theological teaching, “the separating line between the church and the world has been destroyed by “professing born again Christians” (Guti 2009, p.32). A lot has been written about how Pentecostal movements try to create a boundary between themselves and the world, sometimes with limited success (Haynes 2012; Chua 2012; Engelke 2004; Engelke 2010; Meyer 1998b; Maxwell 1998). What we see in the data I have presented here is a different kind of a complex entanglement between the church and the way the world penetrates the church through theological teachings and processes of conversion. Guti relates cases where people in some countries who claim to be born again, present material in television programmes that are unscriptural. This creates confusion as to how to understand the practice of conversion and salvation. As Guti points out, some evangelists no longer initiate the truth. They take the model of this world. This speaks of a retooled approach to Christianity that aims to make it less challenging, especially as people “compromise with sin” (Guti 2009, p.33). However, the secret of FIFMI is that “Sin must be punished and put off” (Guti 2009, p.36).

Given his merging of Christianity and the world, evidenced by his knowledge of the biblical ‘truth’ and his criminal behaviour, Francis represents this version of retooled Christianity. This version believes in harvesting the benefits of being a Christian without shouldering the burden that comes with it, what Guti calls ‘carrying the cross.’ This deviates from what

FIFMI believes because Jesus said that “he that follows me must deny himself and carry his cross” (Guti 2009, p.33). Guti himself relates that when he started the church, God told him that “you are going to suffer for my work. You are going to cry because of my work. But I am going to be with you. No one is going to hurt you” (Guti 2009, p.39). This was fulfilled especially when the ministry was small and some religious leaders informed ruling party officials that he was involved in anti-government politics.

Thinking with Bernard’s relationship with Francis demonstrates that in everyday life, the ways in which people practice religion do not always conform to the normative doctrine that underlie more formal definitions of organised religion. As anthropologists Schielke and Debevec (2012) argue, if we look at the way issues of religion are presented and debated by experts and authorities, we commonly gain an image of a specific religious tradition as a comprehensive metaphysical, moral and spiritual order. Such depictions of religion presuppose the existence of a coherent religious world-view. However, as Bernard’s case demonstrated, this is not often reflected in the experience of everyday life, given its spontaneity. Schielke and Debevec put this argument succinctly:

If . . . we ask people about their specific concerns, experiences and trajectories, and if we look at the way people live lives of which religious beliefs and practices constitute a part, we gain an image in which religion is a highly immediate practice of making sense of one’s life, coming to terms with fear and ambivalence, all-present at times and absent at other times, very sincere in some moments, and *contradictory* in other moments. In such a practice, the key problem is how to navigate a course of life, and coherence and order are less of an issue. (Schielke & Debevec 2012, p.1 my emphasis).

The contradictions between religion as an ideology defined by experts and religion as lived everyday also inform the ambivalences that mark the life of migrant congregants such as Bernard. This situation is heightened by the contradictory identities of the (non)religious people they encounter in everyday socio-spatial contexts, such as when a scammer is also knowledgeable in the word of God. These contradictions challenge the

ideologies of religion since they create hope of possible conversion (of Francis the scammer) but also highlight the dangers of ‘unnecessary’ and hopeless identification with ‘the world.’ Also, when a Christian enjoys good social relations with a non-Christian – sharing food, jokes, assisting one another financially – religious ideologies become challenged. Thus, more than a year after Bernard moved out of the apartment, he still regularly visited them. As evidence of the kind of relations he had with the landlord and Francis, he even made arrangements for one of his friends to occupy the room he had vacated. As someone who liked ‘showing off’ when he has money, Francis sometimes gave Bernard the highest denomination he had when they met in town or when the latter visited the former.

For these reasons, Bernard believed that he and Francis “are friends but not that kind of friend that I will phone and chat with every now and then.” This is because, despite the fact that Francis had known the ‘truth’ (about the need to attend church), he had refused to change. “He will open Bible scriptures for you, Jeremiah what, I will not do this and that, says the Lord. But for him to accept it he doesn’t want. You can actually tell that he doesn’t want to accept. That is where we clashed”. What is evident here is how Bernard struggled to define the boundaries of his relations with Francis. This resonates with Simmel’s (1971) understanding of how ambivalence works, for instance, when love is simultaneously accompanied by the desire to dominate, or when attraction and repulsion operate at the same time. What Simmel calls sociation (1971), that is, the particular patterns and forms in which men associate and interact with one another, always involves love and hatred, harmony and conflict. This, for Simmel, is because conflict often results in the creation of stronger bonds between people (Coser 1971). In the case of Bernard, the more he thought about his Christian values vis-à-vis Francis, the more he learnt that “you cannot ignore someone just because he is a thief”. Unwittingly, Bernard prioritised his messy relations with Francis over certain Christian principles, but also maintained a cautious approach to these relations.

While Bernard’s experience with his co-tenants was not the best, he was full of praise for the landlord, a Nigerian migrant who is married to a South African national. As he commented:

I have never seen someone who is so nice like that. He was a Christian. He was that kind of landlord who, whenever we had an altercation amongst ourselves as tenants, would sit down with all of us and request each of us to relate our concerns. Then he would say, 'Bernard, I know you have too many people that come and stay with you, you must buy extra electricity.' Then he would turn to the other guys and say, 'You guys, when you have problems with Bernard don't shout at him. You must call me.' He was so nice. He owns a bar, but he is nice.

By mentioning that the landlord owned a bar, Bernard innocently brought out the 'bad' side of his otherwise untainted landlord. In doing so, Bernard highlighted the mishmash of the landlord's identities. For Stewart and Shaw (1994), religious practices and beliefs do not simply fuse with other ideologies and traditions. Rather, how they are articulated and developed comes from lived realities with a multiplicity of expectations, possibilities and ideas. This engagement is not always friendly and inclusively syncretic. Understanding the way people live everyday life in this way is not to say that religion is insignificant or does not exist. Rather, it points to the interweaving of religion with people's everyday political, social, economic activities at home, at work and in other contexts. As Ammerman argues in relation to people's identities, "we are never only one thing, even when that thing is religion" (2014, p.195). We are a multiplicity of identities. The Rhodes Livingston anthropologists such as Max Gluckman (1958) stressed what they called situational identities. So it would seem that religion is not an all-or-nothing category. People may have and enact their religious identities together with other multiple identities of being a brother to a non-believer, a flat mate of an alcoholic, and a Muslim workmate to a Christian. However, as I present below, such a view of the interweaving of religion with other social, cultural and political aspects of everyday life was not always subscribed to by some of the migrant congregants I worked with.

Conclusion

In the context of ethno-religious diversity, everyday experiences of sharing accommodation entail social complexities regarding mundane practices. While conflict

may be a part of this experience, 'conviviality' often predominates in these daily social relations, as reflected through the banal acts of sharing food, jovial chats, and sometimes mutual borrowing of petty cash to buy food. In some cases, co-tenants relate better to some members than others. Such cases may present ambivalences, especially when the co-tenants are marked by seemingly disparate religious orientations, with potential to bring about tensions and misunderstanding. However, religious ideologies often have peripheral significance in shaping tensions and intimacies of everyday life. Other social, political, and economic aspects also inform experiences of living together. These aspects are a reflection of the ordinariness of social relations and depart from the formal, expert, institutional definitions of religion as coherent and systematic. This is not to say there are not migrant congregants who may attempt to wall themselves off from co-tenants whose religious backgrounds are different to theirs. The point here is that even in cases where stringent religious values are practiced, seemingly rigid social boundaries are often put to test when ethno-religiously diverse tenants share relatively small apartments, more so given the concomitant imperatives and courtesy required when sharing social and physical spaces.

CHAPTER EIGHT: REVISITING THE ARGUMENT

Introduction

In this thesis, I have argued for rethinking the conceptualisation of the experiences of Zimbabwean migrant congregants' social relations inside and outside church-based social boundaries. While Zimbabwean migrants use church and family institutions to carve out convivial spaces, such spaces may not be defined rigidly as either for or against the accommodation of Zimbabwean migrants and South African nationals. I attempted to explore the ways in which individual congregants' church-based social boundaries, traditions and doctrines intersected with other social boundaries beyond the church, thereby setting up convivial relations with diverse people in everyday life. By ethnographically exploring individual congregants' everyday experiences of migration-motivated social relations, the study departed from seeing migrant congregants as a circumscribed faith community that constructs social and physical spaces outside the church in terms of hostility. Rather, I pointed to the complex, ambivalent and often contradictory practices and processes of convivial relations in everyday life. This complexity meant that there was an interface between multiple institutions, both religious and non-religious, in the production of social relations.

Like Glick Schiller and Caglar (2015) and Werbner (2013), I developed my thesis by considering the different situations that promoted convivial relations despite ethno-religious difference. This entailed asking where, when, how and why conviviality occurred. To address these questions, I had to explore the everyday realities of individual congregants in multiple spaces as a way to understand the mundane manifestations of social life. A focus on routine social encounters did not mean that there was no conflict between different social actors. Rather, as I demonstrated throughout the thesis, especially in Chapter Seven, both conflict and conviviality often punctuated the sharing of apartments. However, 'surface solidarities' seemed to take precedence over social tensions related to divergent religious doctrines. Surface solidarities meant that, rather than focusing on points of divergence, co-tenants from diverse ethno-religious backgrounds developed relations based on issues of common interest. Such issues, or

‘domains of commonality’ (Nina Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2015) could be movies, food, or sports. This was also the case even in public spaces where the congregants met South Africans and migrants from other countries.

I argued in Chapter Four that a focus on how individual congregants built social relations should consider the multiple ways through which FIFMI worked to grow numerically. Since the outreach ministry was mainly conducted by individual congregants, and not as mass evangelism projects, the agency of members took centre-stage in mediating interactions with prospective converts. I tried to address the following questions: How do individual congregants contribute to church growth? In what ways, if any, do different forms of church members’ evangelism create a platform to relate to people who do not attend the church? How do individual church congregants practice the movement’s doctrines while at the same time reaching out to prospective converts? In addressing these questions, I managed to articulate the banality of both boundary transcendence and closure between church members and people who did not attend FIFMI. What we saw is that the process of conversion and church growth entailed social outreach that promoted some level of interaction with the world. Individual congregants had to conduct themselves outside the church in a manner that invited people to the church. Sharing accommodation, workspaces, and preaching to prospective converts required short- to long-term engagement with them. Alongside the conversion project, doctrinal boundaries were transcended through festivities and other functions that were open to people from outside the church. Krause (2011) points out concerning Pentecostalism and migration that their transgression of cultural and geographical spaces have the potential to promote what she terms ‘cosmopolitan sensibilities and sociabilities’. Such sociabilities transcend the ‘benign universalisms’ informed by the process of converting people. However, in trying to appeal to prospective converts, the congregants sometimes unconsciously contradicted their mission by undermining the traditions and relations that were cherished by the former. The members also labelled and stereotyped those who were not born again as ‘lost souls’ that needed to be ‘won’ back into the kingdom of light. This is not to say that stereotypical remarks were only made by the Zimbabwean migrant congregants as prospective converts had their own stereotypes about FIFMI in particular and churches in general. At the same time, the steady conversion of South Africans demonstrated that

stereotypes were made alongside positive expectations that the church had something good to offer.

Still on the aspect of church growth and social relations, we noted in Chapter Four the role played by small church groups such as cells, in reaching out to 'the world' and carving out convivial relations. While cell groups were constructed, and operated, as groups, their outlook in terms of creating social relations outside the church centred more on the individual. It is individual members who brought their friends, workmates, and neighbours to the cell group. It is also individual members who strove to live exemplary lives where they worked and lived in order to attract prospective converts to the cell group and to the church. Since congregants were not homogeneous, they had different ways of relating with the people they encountered. While some did not say much about their church when they met people outside the church, others had conversion as their primary mission. It is in the process of chatting with prospective converts that social relations were created and sometimes sustained. For these reasons, the agency of individual congregants was worth noting. Since individual congregants had different experiences where they lived and worked, responses to such relations were also diverse. This created differential approaches and degrees of contact with ethnic and religious diversity.

Situational social encounters

I also explored the role of chance meetings between the individual congregants and people who were not members of FIFMI. As Chapter Five highlighted, I suggested that to understand social relations is to contend with the intricacies of encounters in particular contexts. It is also to consider the varying and often contradicting significance attached to religious affiliation by individual congregants in the situations they find themselves in. Some situations were experienced as if the church members did not even attend church, while for others church doctrines stringently shaped social interactions. Most of the experiences of the congregants pointed to the idea that, in public modes of transport there was always a high chance of meeting people who had diverse religious views. A conscious awareness of this presence of religion in public spaces had adverse implications for the creation of social life. However, as we noted, being of different religious backgrounds did not always impinge on the building of convivial relations.

Despite probable areas of difference, interlocutors often discussed topics that focused on their surface commonalities. Chance encounters in public spaces sometimes became both sustained and productive in the sense of yielding material resources and affection. Again, studying such relations had implications for the kinds of representations of public and parochial spaces vis-à-vis Zimbabwean migrants and other ethno-religious groups.

Accommodation: church as ‘community?’

While FIFMI congregants demonstrated some characteristics of a ‘community’ through convening in cell groups and other church-based social and religious gatherings, individual members also often erected boundaries from fellow church members, as with non-church members, when it suited them. Here, as I showed in Chapter Five, I concurred with other seminal work by van Dijk (2000) and Englund (2002) that the belief in churches as tight-knit communities is more ideological and nostalgic than empirically grounded. I argued that a stress on mechanical solidarity in relation to everyday social relations falls short of articulating the realities and complexities of social life. In this regard, I suggested that it is important to acknowledge social bonds, but also to consider factors that can militate against the constitution of such bonds. Shannon Morreira’s (2010) study of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants demonstrates that one of the barriers to their quest to seek legal residence in South Africa is that they themselves are positioned within various social categories. This limited their chances to speak with one voice.

Although some studies have argued that Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa use church affiliation to bond as ‘Zimbabweans’ and not forge ties with other social groups (see Hungwe 2013b), the realities of searching for accommodation caused them to deviate from this. Perhaps the bonding argument speaks to a particular class of Zimbabweans in the poorer classes than the one I focused on in my study. Such impecunious classes have received considerable research attention and are known to even share single rooms (Worby 2010; Siziba 2014). They also live in some of the less affluent neighbourhoods of South Africa where rentals are relatively low. While some of the migrant congregants who participated in my study may not be classified as occupying “elite and well paid positions in universities, brokerage houses and legal offices” (Worby 2010, p.424), they strove to live a life that could be loosely defined as middle class.

Although some used church based networks to look for accommodation, many of them preferred using online housing adverts. This was more efficient than church social media platforms that did not always help in advertising houses and apartments that suited specific interests of certain individual congregants. As most migrants argued, websites such as Gumtree and OLX provided diverse options from which to choose. More important, however, was the opportunity to avoid sharing an apartment with fellow church members when one searched for accommodation online. This way, good relations with fellow church mates were supposedly maintained.

In relation to accommodation, I noted that real experiences of boundary-making and precarious belonging produced localised experiences of 'communities' divorced from abstract notions of church-as-community. While churches, as institutions, can provide a sense of community, belonging, as Vered Amit (2010) argues, is often a personal experience. What this implies is that one needs to consider everyday relations and how they inform definitions of belonging. Like Alexander et al (2007, p.783), I argued for an understanding of "the complex contours through which individual, familial, local and collective identities are lived". As Alexander et al (2007) and Glick Schiller and Caglar (2015) point out, migrants' and minority ethnic groups' social life should be understood through the lenses of personal networks or personal 'communities' of family, individual, friendship, and proximal relations that fragment, traverse and transcend abstract notions of imagined communities or perceived circumscribed church boundaries. Alexander et al (2007) found that while some people in their research on 'minority' migrants in Britain pointed to the intersection between the more formal dimensions of 'community' and their personal networks, others showed that their networks were more fractured, haphazard and contingent than discussions of 'community' usually suggest. Such fractures and contingencies also dominated the everyday experiences of the migrant congregants I worked with in my study.

In the case of *mukoko* (make-shift, overcrowded houses) and sleeping on the street (see Chapter Six), I noted that church networks were conspicuous by their absence. Rather, new, albeit ambivalent, networks emerged based on sharing accommodation. Although some of the migrant congregants mentioned that they would attend church on Sunday,

many, at least in the early months of coming to South Africa, were pre-occupied with efforts to establish themselves and to find a job. This meant that their immediate community was the people with whom they shared accommodation, and not necessarily church mates. In this case, lack of everyday physical and social interaction negatively affected experiences of religious congregation as community.

In my presentation of the interplay of conviviality and conflict between ethno-religiously diverse co-tenants in Chapter Seven, I highlighted how living together in apartments often led to quotidian acts of sharing both material and non-material resources. In turn, this, I suggested, resulted in the creation of authentic communities marked by the simultaneous presence and absence of religion in social relations. In comparison to the often ideological and imagined communities (Anderson 1983) of churches and other organised religions, authentic communities of co-tenants have most of the features of practical communities; physical propinquity, everyday sharing, and multilayered practices of conviviality and conflict. Here, religion did not have a straightjacketing influence on social relations. Rather, social life was ordinary and spontaneous. In addition, as I highlighted, other social, political, and economic factors came in to inform this spontaneous trajectory of everyday social life. In fact, religion's conspicuous absence in certain social contexts sometimes contradicted its definition as a set of symbols and codes guiding everyday social encounters (Geertz 1993).

I also used insights from Simmel to argue that church-based social boundaries have the potential to hinder and enable, as well as to liberate and to confine human action. As Marotta (2008, p.298) argues, "Humans are a boundary constructing species, but we are also able to defy the boundaries that we impose and which are imposed on us by social, economic and religious institutions". In this regard, I argued that it was the church, through various ministries, that designed – whether formally or informally – rules and regulations governing contact with 'the world.' The same rules and regulations were then introduced to the congregants. Often, these rules were crafted in keeping with Biblical expectations, although they were not always uniform across different churches. When such rules and regulations were introduced to the congregants, which was heterogeneous with regard to age, socio-economic class, degree of commitment to church activities, the reception was

not always uniform across the congregants. Individual congregants' agency informed how these rules complemented or competed with their own social practices. Here, as I showed in Chapters Four and Six, I did not imply that individual congregants used their agency to 'resist' or consciously circumvent church principles. Rather, I pointed to the subjective interpretation and implementation of these rules and regulations based on particular conceptions and misconceptions of them. I highlighted that this agency was also about responding to the contingencies of social situations that did not always make it practical to refer back to church ideologies.

As I attempted to demonstrate in Chapter Four, the argument against reifications of religion-based social boundaries was not to say that Zimbabwean migrant congregants did not build social relations amongst themselves as congregants. Instead, it was a critique of the scope of the belief in the circumscription of religion-based social relations and of the degree to which socio-spatial contexts outside organised religion were impersonal, hostile, and indifferent to migrant congregants. Baumann (1996) has argued that in their everyday lives, social actors negotiate contradictory discourses of belonging and multiple boundaries. The Rhodes Livingstone Institute researchers also focused on situational analysis to show how actors adapted and deployed multiple subject positions – as rural migrants, urban workers and Africans – in their interactions in the compounds on the Copperbelt Mines of what was then Northern Rhodesia (Gluckman 1958). For migrant congregants, this entailed a situational approach to experiencing social life in multiple institutions in everyday life – family, at work, school, with flatmates – in addition to religion-based socio-spatial contexts. It is important to see religion-based social relations as capable of interfacing with non-religion-based social encounters (the profane) in private, parochial and public spaces (see Hunter 1985). Religion should not be isolated from other aspects of human experience, such as economic and social forces and relations that may be of primary importance, and may eclipse the value attached to religion-based social experiences (Ramey 2007). It is also important to consider the ways in which individual congregants attach different meanings, experiences and perceptions to the shared socio-spatial settings they find themselves in in real time (Ingrid 2014).

Suggestions for further research

It is my hope that this study will provoke further debates around similar issues, and there are many research angles from which such debates could be developed. While my study focused on a single church, future studies could consider exploring the topic from a comparative angle, that is, studying two or more organised religious groups to understand the ways in which their doctrines frame the social boundaries for each group. My assumption here is that churches have different approaches regarding social contact with 'the world.' For instance, Illana Van Wyk's (2014) study of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG) in South Africa revealed that the church does not encourage intimate social relations between its members. As Van Wyk argues, the UCKG is 'a church of strangers.' Members were also suspicious of their close relatives, accusing them of derailing their material success and their quests for good health through various forms of witchcraft. In view of the different ways in which churches understand notions of social relations, future studies could investigate the possibility of such social stalemates in relation to migrants and their church congregants, kin, and workmates from a comparative perspective. Given that everyday social life is a mishmash of social encounters, such a comparative analysis, whether in a single city or at a larger scale (national), is important in that it has the potential to reveal the influence of religious affiliation on social relations on a broader level than my study.

A comparative analysis could also focus on FIFMIs situated in different residential areas, for example, one drawing membership from highly affluent suburbs, one from medium-income suburbs, and another one whose membership is largely from economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This has the potential to provide insights into the diverse ways in which social boundaries and church doctrines are constructed and deconstructed on the basis of social class, and physical location. On account of the fact that the degree to which migrants in these residential sections own and share residential apartments differs, a comparative study of this nature will be important in revealing the link between ethno-religiously diverse co-residents and boundary maintenance and transgression. Here I draw insights from literature on gated communities, which highlights the ways in which such communities may promote social exclusion and seclusion (Jurgens & Gnad

2002; Eitzen 2004; Landman 2004). While migrant congregants in gated communities and other affluent neighbourhoods may enjoy a life of low crime rates, segregation and reduced levels of interaction between members may, however, result in the atrophy of social life (Eitzen 2004). In this regard, a cross-congregational study may demonstrate differential degrees of sociality, leading to informed conceptions about notions of social cohesion and integration.

Another approach could be to study everyday social boundaries and social relations among members of a church that draws its membership from a proximally close geographical area. My study focused on a church whose members came from widely dispersed residential locations. This, as I suggested, made the everyday realities of community difficult to achieve. Studies that focus on what Bobby Wilson (1979), focusing on the reasons for church participation among black in-migrants in the US, calls 'communal churches', may produce different results. Communal churches draw their members from geographically adjacent areas, and members use the church for multiple functions, including the functions which ideally should be performed by kin, formal schools, and social clubs. As a result, "the intensity of interpersonal relationship within the communal church often led to cohesive social and spatial networks outside the church" (Wilson 1979, p.207). On the other hand, what Wilson calls 'associational churches', are composed of members who live in open communities, or communities without propinquity. The physical distance that characterised the residential location of members also had a negative impact on the social distance between them. Physical distance resulted in members becoming "socialized to the impersonal, segmented life-style and pressure of city living" (Wilson 1979, p.210). While acknowledging that in urban areas, as in many rural contexts today, 'traditional' communities do not exist (Stoller 1997; Comaroff & Comaroff 2003), there are FIFMIs in high density urban areas where congregants live physically closer to one another than the ones I worked with in my study. By virtue of this geographical proximity, members in such churches may involve more everyday physical and social contact than the ones I worked with in the inner city neighbourhood of Cape Town.

Throughout the thesis, I have argued for understanding individual migrant congregants' notions of belonging, social relations and tensions within situated contexts of everyday life. Such an approach entails focusing not only on within-church social practices, but also experiences of social relations beyond the context of the church where individual congregants meet with people from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. The experiences of individual congregants demonstrated the dialectic nature of opening and closing multiple and layered social boundaries that shaped the realities of living with different social groups.

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